OLIVIER MESSIAEN'S TRISTAN TRILOGY: TIME AND TRANSCENDENCE

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Audrey Jean Ekdahl Davidson

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PREFACE

The works of Olivier Messiaen were first introduced to me through a translation which I provided some years ago of an article by Heinz Werner Zimmermann. Since that time, I have had the opportunity to study not only Messiaen's own works, but also some related areas such as Indian music, ethnomusicology, medieval and renaissance music, surrealism, and medieval romance--all areas which are relevant to the topic of this thesis. In particular, I wish to note my indebtedness to Jon Higgins and Allen Kagan, with whom I studied Indian music during the summer of 1969. It was also my privilege during that summer to have some long and serious conversations on Indian music with T. Ranganathan, a remarkable musician from Madras. With regard to medieval and renaissance music, I owe much to Professor Johannes Riedel and the late Arnold Salop. In other areas, I must thank Professor Bruno Nettl, who introduced me to ethnomusicology, and my students in my Humanities classes at Western Michigan University who joined me in the study of surrealism and of the medieval versions of the Tristan story.

My methodology in this thesis derives from a long interest in aesthetics and from an immediate need for an approach that would handle the very difficult compositions included in Messiaen's Tristan trilogy. In particular, I have received many suggestions of substance from Robert von der Osten and Professor Otto Gründler as well as William Routt. My understanding of the poetry of Messiaen owes much to conversations with Professor David Collins and Professor Benjamin Ebling. I received help with Sanskrit from Professor Robert Shafer, Mr. Shrikant Rao, and Professor Bonnie Sigren Busick. Mrs. Joyce Chaplin and Professor David Chaplin gave much needed encouragement and suggestions with regard to Peruvian lore.

I am also grateful to Professor Robert Ricci for giving some helpful advice during the time I was analyzing the music. I owe a debt of gratitude to librarians at Western Michigan University, the University of Michigan, the University of Minnesota, and the British Museum. Also, I wish to thank my husband, Professor Clifford Davidson, who because of his experience as editor and bibliographer was able to give invaluable help in matters of style.

Finally, I am very grateful in many further ways to Professor Riedel, who gave me important initial encouragement as well as vital help along the way during the years the thesis has been under way; without his wise counsel, this thesis could not have been written.

The publishers of the works in Messiaen's Tristan trilogy have given permission to quote passages. The examples from *Harawi* are reprinted with the special permission of Alphonse Leduc & Cie, Owners and Publishers, Paris, while those from *Turangalîla-Symphonie* appear with the authorization of Durand & Cie, Editeurs-Proprietaires, Paris. The examples from *Cinq Rechants* are reprinted with the kind permission of Editions Salabert, the holder of the copyright.

The manuscript of this thesis was typed by Chris Lanning.

CHAPTER I

Introduction

Before 1945, Olivier Messiaen was known as a Catholic organist (the incumbent at the Church of the Holy Trinity, Paris) and as a composer of religious music. The appearance of a trilogy based on the Tristan and Isolde story--*Harawi*, a cycle of twelve songs for soprano and piano; *Turangalîla*, a symphony; and *Cinq Rechants*, for unaccompanied chorus--in the years 1945, 1946, and 1948 respectively marks a distinct departure in subject matter from his previous work. Messiaen himself has called the trilogy his greatest achievement.[1] Needless to say, the Tristan trilogy not only revealed a surprising side of Messiaen's character, but also meant the application of his own previously-developed musical language to secular compositions of great stature.

A glance at Messiaen's work before 1945 reveals a composer whose life seems to have found its center in the expression of his Christian faith. As late as 1967, Messiaen in an interview said: "The first idea that I wanted to express...is the existence of the truth of the Catholic faith." He adds: "I was born believing."[2] His early organ works are headed by such religious titles as *Le Banquet Célèste* (1928), *L'Ascension* (1933), *La Nativité du Seigneur* (1935) and *Les Corps glorieux* (1939). As a general rule, Messiaen either prefaces these works with his own explanations of the programmatic nature of the music or provides appropriate biblical texts which are intended to illuminate their intended theological associations.

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[1] Claude Samuel, *Entretiens avec Olivier Messiaen* (Paris: Belfond, 1967), p. 147.

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 11.

Even in compositions not written for the organ--e.g., Quatuor pour la Fin du Temps (Quartet for the End of Time), written in 1941 while he was in the German prison camp at Gorlitz--the religious implications are not abandoned. If anything, the programmatic basis of the quartet, which presents to us the apocalyptic angel who announces the end of Time (borrowed from Revelation 10:6), is even more urgently theological and eschatologically oriented. It is a sign of Messiaen's piety that the angel is not so much a figure of terror as it is a beloved figure.[3] The angel is particularly prominent in the second and seventh movements of this eight-movement work. In the second movement, against the background of the "impalpable harmonies of heaven,"[4] the angel is descending, "clothed with a cloud: and a rainbow was upon his head, and his face was as it were the sun, and his feet as pillars of fire" (Revelation 10:1). In the seventh movement, the angel is spectacularly enveloped by a rainbow, which is symbolic of peace, wisdom, and "all luminous and sonorous vibrations."[5]

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[3] Olivier Messiaen, Préface, Quatour pour la Fin du Temps (Paris: Durand, n.d.), p. i; translation with additional material in program notes by Olivier Messiaen for the recording of Quartet for the End of Time (Musical Heritage Soc. MHS 978).

[4] Préface, Quatuor, p. i.

[5] Ibid., p. ii.

The sacred also intrudes into the secular in Messiaen's three vocal cycles written before World War II. *Trois Mélodies* (1928), which sets a poem, "Le Sourire," by his mother as the central song--framed by his own verses at the beginning and end of the cycle--concludes in his final song, "La Fiancée perdue," with a cry to Jesus to bless the lost one and to give her repose. *Poèmes pour Mi* (1936-37), written for his first wife, Claire Delbos, who had been given the nickname "Mi" by Messiaen,[6] speaks of love between man and woman, of the sacrament of marriage, of the birth of a child, and of the relationship of God and man. Thus, in his religious faith, Messiaen, like the medieval artisans totally enveloped by their faith, had made what may at least superficially seem to be a wholeness of his life and art. No artificial lines seem drawn between sacred and profane. All of life--indeed, all human relationships--seem ultimately held in the hand of God, as in Auguste Rodin's sculpture.[7] Unfortunately, closer scrutiny of the poems and the music does not seem to bear out this integrated vision. One notices the surrealistic and even nightmarish quality of some of the poems, especially "Épouvante," which begins and ends with a demonic laugh. Tremendous anxiety is evidenced here, as in the words "Des lambeaux sanglants te suivraient dans les ténèbres/ comme une vomissure triangulaire" ("The shreds would follow you into the dark like triangular vomit").[8] Antoine Goléa has commented that this song "has the look of a medieval treatise on sorcery where one confuses the wounds inflicted on the body of physical love with the marks of the devil...."[9]

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[6] *Poèmes pour Mi* (Paris: Durand, 1939)

[7] *Hand of God* (1898), Rodin Museum, Paris; photograph of sculpture reproduced in William Fleming, *Arts and Ideas*, 3rd ed. (New York: Holt, Rinehart, Winston, n.d.), p. 490, fig. 555.

For Messiaen at this time, marriage and its relationship between a man and woman apparently involved real terror and anguish along with the peaceful moments. Then at the end of the cycle, he seems to escape from such human relationships altogether; the husband stands alone in prayer to the diety for the healing of his own soul. Likewise, the final song in Chants de Terre et de Ciel (1938) also moves away from human physical relations, which appear earlier in the cycle, and toward the transcendental. Messiaen's poetry here speaks of Christ's Resurrection, of the angel sitting at the empty tomb, and of the divinely resurrected Son of God who sings praises to the Father as He surrealistically ascends to Him. Musically, there is a very sophisticated kind of word painting at this point, subtly indicating upward movement.

Messiaen's musical technique in the two later cycles is, of course, already well formed and mature in his use of modes, nonretrogradable and added rhythms, favorite melodic intervals including the tritone, chords of superpositions, and chords with added notes. In 1944, he could write as follows about these cycles:

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[8] Poèmes pour Mi, I, 12-15.

[9] Antoine Goléa, Rencontrez avec Olivier Messiaen (Paris: Julliard, 1960), p. 130. Unless otherwise indicated, normally the translations from French texts are mine.

> The two cycles for voice and piano entitled Poèmes pour Mi and Chants de Terre et de Ciel have unfortunately been quoted very little in the present work [The Technique of My Musical Language]. Since they are particularly "true" in sentiment and typical of my manner, I advise the reader who desires to understand my music better to begin by reading them.[10]

This, then, is the art of Olivier Messiaen as it was developed by him in the period before the great Tristan trilogy. While this art gives a hint or foreshadowing of what is to come, here is no unfolding such as we have in the Tristan trilogy.

In retrospect, signs of the ensuing abrupt change in Messiaen's consciousness may be found in his music in the tortured expression associated with physical love, which seemed then merely to interrupt or impair relationships between the man and divinity. In his previous wish to escape from the physical to a metaphysical existence, he had proclaimed that life in its most fleshly sense was becoming a problem to be solved or transcended. The language of psychology speaks of repression which gives way to a surge of emotion which breaks through into a new experience, after which nothing can be quite the same any longer. A metamorphosis from such strict and ascetic religiosity that makes love difficult on a purely human level, to a glorification of human passions such as we have in the Tristan story, is perhaps thus not so unusual. But why did he find his aesthetic solution, the objective correlative for his emotion, in the myth of Tristan and Isolde? For here is a medieval story that hardly can be considered within the religious framework of Christianity. Here sin and guilt would seem to reign--not resurrected and glorified bodies. It seems a strange subject for one who continued to say of himself, "I am above all a Catholic musician. All my works, *religious or not*, are an act of faith and glorify the mystery of Christ."[11] "I have wanted," he says elsewhere, "to express the marvels of Faith."[12] But from the standpoint of any rigid Catholic code, it would seem that Tristan and Isolde must be labelled immoral; their behavior as described in the medieval accounts would appear antithetical to the deep faith and strict morality expoused by Messiaen. Dante, the great Catholic poet, explicitly placed Tristan in his Inferno (Canto V). Yet the story of Tristan and Isolde as it appears traditionally is not entirely unrelated to the religious point of view, for the deep sense of sin or guilt can exist only if one has lived within the structure of a strong personal ethic, whether or not that ethic is Christian.

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[10] Olivier Messiaen, The Technique of My Musical Language, Vol. I, trans. John Satterfield (Paris: Leduc, 1956), p. 71.

The change in Messiaen's music does coincide with a period of personal crisis. Tanneguy de Quénetain writes:

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[11] Guy Ferchault, "De La Mort de Frank à Nos Jours," in *La Revue Musicale* (La Musique Religieuse Française), as quoted in Stuart Waumsley, *The Organ Music of Olivier Messiaen* (Paris: Leduc, 1968), p. 9.

[12] Samuel, p. 19.

Messiaen hates any intrusion on his private life. "I have a right to a little respect for my privacy, at least until I am dead." But can one really bypass completely the drama of his personal life and problems if one wants to grasp the true nature of the man and his work? The fact is that, during the war, his wife fell ill with a serious disease of the brain which first attacked her mental faculties. Transferred to a nursing home she slowly wasted away, and by 1959 all her faculties, including those of hearing, sight, and the ability to move her limbs, had gone.

Absolutely cut off from his wife by this illness, but indissolubly tied to her by the marriage sacrament (Messiaen's religious convictions were, and still are, very strict), he met in his class at the Conservatoire "an inspired, sublime and unique pianist": Yvonne Loriod. It was then that he composed his great works for the piano.... In addition,...he composed the *Harawi, chant d'amour et de mort*, the *Turangalîla-Symphonie* and the *Cinq Rechants*, three works glorifying profane love that drew inspiration from the Tristan myth--the supreme myth of passionate love which a transcendent veto causes to remain unconsummated, and which finds fulfillment only in death.[13]

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[13] Tanneguy de Quénetain, "Messiaen, Poet of Nature," *Music and Musicians*, XI (May 1963), 9-10.

While the medieval accounts of such writers as Beroul, Thomas of Britain, and Gottfried von Strassburg emphasized the sensuality of the lovers, Messiaen in an interview with Claude Samuel has insisted upon the unconsummated nature of the love between his Tristan and Isolde. He says that he has treated "a love most great and most pure."[14] It is thus a love in which the lovers are entrapped and which may not lead to the satisfaction of desire. "I think," says Messiaen, "of the prison of air where Vivien enclosed Merlin."[15] Such remarks, however, may apply better to _Harawi_ than to _Turangalîla-Symphonie_ or _Cinq Rechants_. The fifth movement of the symphony indeed celebrates an ecstatic and even orgiastic expression of love.

Most important, then, is the fact that for Messiaen his personal experience meant a discovery of his own humanity. His own words again are of the highest significance: "A certain number of my works are destined to throw a light on the Catholic faith.... _But I am also a human being_. Like all human beings, I am sensitive to human love--a love which I wanted to express in three of my works through the intermediary of the greatest myth of human love, that of Tristan and Isolde."[16] The myth, since it involves a situation not precisely like his own, is, of course, a distancing of material which otherwise would be merely personal. But perhaps it is enough that the myth grapples with the problems of a love which leads to death, and which involves sacrifice and renunciation. This love, which derives from the deepest resources of the human personality and which grasps one with a force beyond one's will--a force symbolized in the ancient story by the love potion--is marked by anguish as well as by joy. The concept of the "abyss," with which he had been earlier fascinated in his Quartet for the End of Time, now in the Tristan trilogy becomes the symbol of despair and anguish as the lover is caught in the triangle of love. The anguish in his art cannot be entirely cut off from his personal anguish: "I have had plenty of trouble in my life, plenty," Messiaen has said.[17] The abyss, as visualized so dramatically, for example, in Turangalîla-Symphonie, is an archetypal symbol for the most primitive level of man's experience;[18] in Messiaen's work generally it is a highly complicated piece of symbolism. But certainly for Messiaen it is something which cannot be miraculously escaped from or avoided; rather, a "coming through" the abyss is demanded--a "coming through" that eventually means a kind of healing experience after long pain.

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[14] Samuel, p. 23.

[15] _Ibid._, p. 23.

[16] _Ibid._, pp. 11-12.

Messiaen's primary source for the Tristan and Isolde myth seems not to be Beroul or Gottfried, but rather the artist whom

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[17] De Quénetain, p. 10.

[18] Joseph L. Henderson, "Ancient Myths and Modern Man," in Man and His Symbols, ed. Carl G. Jung (1964; rpt. New York: Dell, 1968), pp. 151-52.

Mallarmé called "Le dieu Richard Wagner irradiant un sacre."[19] The texts which Messiaen himself provides in Harawi and Cinq Rechants are, however, not structured as a narrative. Rather, the words Messiaen writes involve a verse that, like symbolist and surrealist poetry as well as surrealist painting, arranges seemingly disjunctive images around a central mythic or archetypal idea. He thus fits into the mainstream of French artistic practice of the last hundred years:

> Already in the nineteenth century Rimbaud had attempted to separate words from their intellectual functions and conventional meanings.... Then Mallarmé ...further liberated words from their conventional senses. Enormously influential in modern European literature, Mallarmé distinguished between "immediate speech"--for the rational uses of everyday existence--and "essential speech"--to deal with the essence of things.... Mallarmé attempted to use words and syllables, free of "worn-out, rational meanings," to give "a purer sense to the words of the tribe" and to affect readers in a nonrational way. He attempted consciously to use language in poetry as composers use sound in music, and not for sound alone but...as "emotional metaphors."[20]

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[19] Mallarmé, "Hommage," l. 13, in Selected Poems, ed. C. F. MacIntyre (Berkeley and Los Angeles: Univ. of California Press, 1965), p. 94.

[20] Nahma Sandrow, Surrealism: Theatre, Arts, Ideas (New York: Harper and Row, 1972), pp. 61-62.

In Harawi and Cinq Rechants, therefore, Messiaen does not stop at making fresh connections between words already in the French language, but also borrows from other languages--Quechua and Sanskrit. Furthermore, especially in Cinq Rechants, he even makes up his own language (e.g., he invents such words as "hayoma kapritama"[21] which appear to be made up of Sanskrit syllables, but which are in fact entirely synthetic).

Messiaen has alternately denied and admitted his affinities with the surrealist movement. He has, for example, preferred the French term surnaturel to describe his work: "there are three categories [of styles]--the real, the surreal, and the supernatural [surnaturel], and I think I have passed these others and have attained the supernatural."[22] But elsewhere he has more frankly admitted the affinities at least between his verse and the surrealist style. "I have been a great reader and admirer of Pierre Reverdy and Paul Eluard," he says; "I am, therefore, some sort of surrealist in the poems for my works, if not in my music."[23]

From the surrealists, therefore, Messiaen apparently takes his way of linking seemingly unrelated images (e.g., the stringing together of the images of water, time, and heaven in Song IX of Harawi). The surrealists had developed this technique of linking images from the psychoanalytic theories of Sigmund Freud, whose ideas about the "subconscious" mind and about the use of free association to probe that previously unexplored area thus became highly influential in the arts. The surrealist painters and poets, under Freud's influence, wanted to tap the resources of their own unconscious minds and of their dreams, and to use that material in their art. André Breton, whom Messiaen admires highly,[24] even attempted automatic writing. Others turned to their fantasies and dreams as sources for visual images. They distrusted rational, logical ways of linking words and symbolic images, and looked instead to their inner selves and their emotions for their poetic and painterly truths.

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[21] Olivier Messiaen, Cinq Rechants (Paris: Salabert, 1949), p. 3.

[22] Pierrette Mari, Olivier Messiaen (Paris: Seghers, 1965), p. 64.

[23] Bernard Gavoty and Olivier Messiaen, "Who Are You, Olivier Messiaen?" Tempo, LVIII (Summer 1961), 36.

The way had been well prepared for the surrealist method of working, of course, by the earlier symbolist poets, especially by Mallarmé. Mallarmé believed that "to name an object is to destroy three-quarters of the enjoyment of a poem, which is made up of the pleasure of guessing little by little; to suggest it--that is the ideal."[25] His way of working seems applicable both to Messiaen's way of making word associations and his way of making musical connections. "I have found," said Mallarmé, "an intimate and peculiar manner of depicting and setting down very fugitive impressions. What is frightening is that all these impressions are required to be woven together as in a symphony, and that I often spend whole days wondering whether one idea can be associated with another, what the relationship between them may be, and what effect they will create."[26]

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[24] De Quénetain, p. 8.

[25] Quoted in Roger Smalley, "Debussy and Messiaen," The Musical Times, CIX (1968), 130.

At times, Messiaen's images in the Tristan trilogy are ones that appear over and over in surrealist painting and poetry. For example, the bird, one of Messiaen's most significant images, was also important as a symbol for Max Ernst--so important indeed that the painter called himself "Loplop, Superior of the Birds."[27] Stars appear again and again in Messiaen's verses and in the surrealists' paintings. Blue skies with cottony clouds are juxtaposed with soft watches crawling with bugs in Dali's well-known Persistence of Memory--a juxtaposition echoed by Messiaen's linkage of "Ciel" and "Temps." Hands and heads are also important in Messiaen's work, especially in "Amour oiseau d'étoile," which was inspired by a specific surrealist painting, Roland Penrose's The Invisible Isle.

According to Nahma Sandrow, the "basic drive to surrealism is toward...a reconciliation of opposites" such as irrationality and higher rational order.[28] Thus in the poetry of Harawi, the finite and infinite, the irrational and rational are brought together. In Song XI, Messiaen in a non-syntactical construction writes,

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[26] Quoted in Smalley, p. 129.

[27] See William S. Rubin, Dada, Surrealism, and Their Heritage (New York: Museum of Modern Art, 1968), p. 106.

[28] Sandrow, p. 21.

"grasshopper the stars," hence transferring the quality of grasshoppers dancing and leaping to the stars. At the same time, underneath these images is a larger reconciliation: the lovers, who have previously been caught by anguish as well as joy, now are transformed into joyful stars which exist beyond anxiety and discomfort. Of Messiaen as well as of the surrealists it may be commented that "reconciliation [is] an intensification in time as well as in spirit, a way to assimilate Bergsonian duration in time. The tension inherent in the willed unification of opposites which are straining apart [lends] a kind of quivering energy...."[29]

Messiaen, of course, is very modest about the quality of his verse: "My poems are made with the music and for the music. They have no literary pretensions."[30] His family had been talented in literature. His mother, the poetess Cécile Sauvage, had even written a cycle of poems entitled *L'Ame en bourgeon* before his birth in which she had spoken in lyrical terms of the coming into existence of a new life: "Des cheveux blonds sur front bombé, des yeux noisette, des yeux riants, parlants, chantants, pensants, un drôle de petit nez carré, une belle fossette (qu'il a gardée) sur la joue..."[31] His father was a teacher of English literature and the translator of Shakespeare, and his brother Alain is also a poet. Olivier Messiaen's own verse has, to be sure, received little praise from critics. It is a poetry, however, that is not expected to stand alone. His verse, as he himself explains, is secondary to the music--but it nevertheless is essential to its expression.

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[29] *Ibid.*, p. 21.

[30] Mari, p. 46.

[31] *Ibid.*, p. 5.

Messiaen's verse proceeds in an apparently non-narrative fashion and yet provides the necessary verbal referents which point to given elements of the myth which is utilized in the Tristan trilogy. Unlike other composers who work with a previously completed libretto or poetic text, Messiaen here and elsewhere has normally composed the music and written the words simultaneously. In an interview with German composer Heinz Werner Zimmermann, he was asked whether text or music was written first. He replied that "in his vocal music, text and musical setting are produced at the same time, whereby the music sensitively takes into account the word accents."[32] Both text and music, therefore, are in a sense wound around the myth in a kind of analysis of the myth.

For Messiaen, the words and music together are clearly a middle way between the myth itself and any logical explanation of the myth.[33] The logical explanation of the myth would lay it out flat--in a sense, an attempt, always precarious, to make a flat map out of a globe. Messiaen's way is to wrap the words and music around the armature of the myth, proceeding in a way analogous to the sculptor creating a piece of additive sculpture. The final result, then, is a composition which accurately shows off the design and the contours of the essential myth at the center.

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[32] Heinz Werner Zimmermann, "Ein Gespräch mit Olivier Messiaen," Musik und Kirche, XXXIX, No. 1 (1969), 39.

[33] Claude Lévi-Strauss, The Raw and the Cooked, trans. John and Doreen Weightmen (New York: Harper and Row, 1969), pp. 14-15.

The *musical* procedure adopted by Messiaen in the Tristan trilogy owes much, of course, to Wagner. The nineteenth-century German, in turn, has been said by Claude Lévi-Strauss to be perhaps the "originator of the structural analysis of myths...*in music*."[34] Lévi-Strauss insists that Wagner made the "discovery that the structure of myths can be revealed through a musical score."[35] Messiaen attempts, we might note, to go beyond Wagner in revealing even more directly (not only in music, but also in the words set to music) the contours of the myth. Within each of the twelve songs of *Harawi*, for example, Messiaen thus attacks separate mythic and hence musical problems as these are found in the mythic material. Similarly, the separate movements of *Turangalîla-Symphonie* (where, since it is a symphony, there is no setting of a text) and the five parts of *Cinq Rechants* present further problems, all related to the mythic core which is at the center of all three works in the Tristan trilogy. But then within each work itself, there is a distinct grouping of problems so that in a sense *Harawi*, *Turangalîla-Symphonie*, and *Cinq Rechants* each present one-third of a larger solution toward which Messiaen has been building throughout the trilogy.[36]

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[34] *Ibid.*, p. 15.

[35] *Ibid.*, p. 15.

As noted above, the principal source of the Tristan myth in Messiaen's trilogy is Wagner's music drama, *Tristan und Isolde*, though he adds a great deal to his original material through the use of other sources, including a Peruvian analogue. In *Harawi*, for example, Isolde is even changed into Piroutcha, from Peruvian folklore, though she appears again under her own name, conventionally spelled "Yseult," in *Cinq Rechants*. Messiaen, of course, did not wish to re-make Tristan und Isolde,[37] but his debt is nevertheless unmistakable.

Messiaen begins *in medias res*, utilizing the material which Wagner had put into Act II of his music drama. The lovers in *Harawi* are already under the spell of the love potion to which Wagner had devoted his entire first act. References to the potion of course do appear when he refers to it as "philtre à deux voix" in the seventh and ninth songs of *Harawi*, and there are also allusions to it in *Cinq Rechants*.[38] The mechanics of the love potion do not interest him so much as the fatal and irresistible nature of passion. The potion is thus not seen as causing love but as a symbol: "Fatal love, irresistible, which transcends all, which suppresses all except itself, which is symbolized by the philter of Tristan and Isolde."[39]

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[36] Goléa, *Rencontres*, p. 34, suggests that the Tristan trilogy might be compared to a three-act play.

[37] Samuel, p. 22.

[38] Cf. Messiaen's curious statement (Samuel, p. 22) disavowing any connection with either the ancient Celtic legend or with the episode of the love potion, except for a few allusions in *Cinq Rechants*.

In the crucial second act of Wagner's music drama, the lovers meet in a garden for a love duet of unparalleled length and intensity. Messiaen too in each work of the trilogy retains garden imagery, though fragmented and combined with material from the Song of Songs and Bosch's painting _The Garden of Earthly Delights_. In Wagner, the lovers, who have surreptitiously met in the dark of the night, sink down on a flowery bank: "Tristan zieht Isolde sanft zur Seite auf eine Blumenbank nieder, senkt sich vor ihr auf die Knie und schmiegt sein Haupt in ihren Arm."[40] Messiaen transforms the "Blumenbank" to "le banc" in the first song of _Harawi_ in "a poetic transposition very direct and very simple of the scenery of the second act of Wagner's _Tristan_."[41] Wagner describes the lovers as having their glances caught on one another: "Dann suchen sie sich wieder mit dem Blick, senken ihn verwirrt und heften ihn wieder mit steigender Sehnsuchtaufeinander."[42] Again these are translated by Messiaen into "eyes immobile, without unravelling your glance" in the first song of _Harawi_.

Wagner's second act contains an _alba_, as Brangäne, like the watchman in the medieval dawn-song or *alba*,[43] warns the lovers to be on their guard. The *alba* constitutes a high point in the opera, combining the quietude of love with the danger of discovery. In *Harawi*, Brangäne's role in the *alba* is taken over by the apes who warn the prince of danger by passing the word "pia" from ape to ape and tree to tree.[44] Also, Brangäne is brought back in *Cinq Rechants*, where the text says, "Les amoureux s'envolent, Brangien dans l'espace tu souffles" ("The lovers fly away, Brangäne, once in space you breathe").[45]

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[39] Mari, p. 52.

[40] Richard Wagner, _Tristan and Isolde_, libretto ed. Stewart Robb (New York: Dutton, 1965), p. 80.

[41] Goléa, _Rencontres_, p. 158. The preferred meaning of _le banc_ is "bench." Goléa's statement, however, is based on an interview with Messiaen.

[42] _Tristan and Isolde_, ed. Robb, p. 46.

As the above quotations from *Cinq Rechants* show, much ambiguity surrounds Messiaen's use of the concluding portion of the myth as told by Wagner. For Wagner, indeed, the point is that the lovers *fail* to heed the watchman's warning and hence are caught by King Mark--an episode that leads to the love-death in Act III. Death is, however, an ever-present reality throughout both Messiaen's and Wagner's handling of the myth. A clear death-wish seems expressed in *Harawi*: "Coupe moi la tête" (Song V); "Coupez ma tête" (Song XI): and the words "La mort est là" (Song IX) are repeated three times. And a cryptic but important mention of death dominates the refrain in the fifth part of *Cinq Rechants*.[46] It is obvious that love causes great anxiety, and can even have fatal consequences.

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[43] See Jonathan Saville, *The Medieval Erotic Alba* (New York: Columbia Univ. Press, 1972), pp. 107-10.

[44] Olivier Messiaen, *Harawi* (Paris: Leduc, 1948), Song VIII. See also Claude Rostand, *Olivier Messiaen*, Collection "Musiciens D'Aujourdhui," Dirigée par André Ball et Jean Solar (Paris: Ventadour, 1957), p. 36.

[45] *Cinq Rechants*, p. 1.

[46] *Ibid*., p. 42.

But in Messiaen's handling of the Tristan myth, love seems also to have redemptive and reintegrative qualities. Joseph Kerman has noted that in Wagner's music drama the "fundamental sense is of a progress toward a state of illumination which transcends yearning and pain" and that thus, at the end, Isolde's Liebestod constitutes "a triumphant ascent, not a tragic catastrophe."[47] So too it is in Messiaen, though the "Tristan" trilogy does not follow the strict sequential pattern of the original myth. The lovers in Harawi pass through at least a metaphoric death and attain the status of stars that join the cosmic dance or lila. In Turangalîla-Symphonie, the movement entitled "Joie du sang des étoiles" ("Joy of the Stars' Blood") engages in "excesses" that demonstrate "that the union of true lovers is for them a transformation on a cosmic scale."[48] Love in the "Tristan" trilogy is a quality which "surpasses the body" and which thus is extended to cosmic dimensions.[49]

At the same time, especially in Harawi which opens the trilogy, Messiaen distances the erotic story from his own personal experience and from even the ancient Celtic story of Tristan and Isolde by grafting onto it material from the Peruvian analogue. His main source for this material is the 1925 book, La musique des Incas et ses survivances, by Raoul and Marguerite d'Harcourt.[50] While some of this book's interpretations and conclusions are now questioned, especially in regard to the authors' over-riding emphasis on pentatonicism in ancient Peruvian music,[51] it is nevertheless a book with which the student of Messiaen's Tristan trilogy must come to terms.

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[47] Joseph Kerman, Opera as Drama (1956; rpt. New York: Vintage, n.d.), p. 195.

[48] Olivier Messiaen, Record Jacket notes for Turangalîla-Symphony (RCA LSC-7051).

[49] Samuel, p. 22.

From the d'Harcourt book Messiaen takes the title of Harawi, the first cycle in the trilogy. The title comes from an important Quechua song form, the harawi (later called yaravi, which is the most common post-Conquest term). As set forth by the d'Harcourts, the distinguishing of genres--harawi, funeral lamentations, songs dealing with the dove, dance songs, songs of farewell, pastoral songs, etc. --involves some overlapping, and Messiaen too draws musical and textual ideas from various of these other categories. For example, some of the harawis treat the subject of the dove, an important symbol of infidelity for the Quechua Indians. Here Messiaen found a rich source of material upon which he could draw as a composer.

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[50] Paris: Geuthner, 1925, 2 vols.

[51] See especially I, 132-35, 138. But see Robert Stevenson, Music in Aztec and Inca Territory (Berkeley and Los Angeles: Univ. of California Press, 1968), pp. 246-47.

Other of the d'Harcourts' findings seem borne out by the musical examples they cite. The form harawi is marked by a melodic phrase which precedes it, and this may be either an instrumental prelude or a vocal (but wordless) prelude (I, 173-74). There is often also a final fast movement (coda) called fuga, not to be confused with the European form, the fugue (I, 166, 174). Upon

Further borrowing by Messiaen from the d'Harcourt book includes the use of actual tunes (e.g., that of the *harawi* "Piruça"[52] for Song V, entitled "L'Amour de Piroutcha") and some verbal borrowing (e.g., "katchikatchi," a Quechua word meaning "grasshopper,"[53] and "toungou," a term for the graceful cooing of the dove[54]). Messiaen takes these Quechua words, unrelated and virtually

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analyzing a number of the examples given by the d'Harcourts, I found that the pieces were made up of several phrases, usually four or more, and that the phrases would be repeated, but in no discernably regularized pattern. Three pieces picked as examples reveal the following patterns:

1. "Piruça" aa^{1}bbc
2. "Saucito, palo verde..." abccd
3. "Yaravi" (d'Harcourt No. 40) abcdabcd

There are through-composed songs in the d'Harcourt collection, but these are definitely in the minority.

The melodies may span the range of a twelfth, and a leap of a seventh or a tenth is not rare (I, 138). The main notes of the melody can be embroidered with various ornaments, including *gruppetti* and "groaning slides" which embellish a note that concludes a phrase (I, 139). In the pure Indian monody, there is no harmony and no modulations; however, a post-Conquest addition is a lower part which is sung at the interval of a third below the melody (I, 138).

It is impossible to speak of the rhythm of the *harawi* without consideration of Quechua prosody. It is possible to find pieces which fit roughly into a 3/4 rhythmic pattern, but according to the d'Harcourts, the rhythm of the music more often than not follows the "exigencies" of the poetry (i, 173). The poetry, instead of being accentual, is considered by the d'Harcourts (and by Garcilaso de la Vega before them) to be a kind of *vers mesuré*, depending on quantitative rather than qualitative meters. These poetic rhythms can be translated into musical rhythmic values of shorts and longs. The meter of the poetry is varied, and so also could be the meter of the music (although the d'Harcourts present only examples that continue one meter throughout the piece, with 3/4, 3/8, 6/8, 2/4, 4/4, 4/8, or 5/8 meter being used). There is no rhyme scheme in the poetry, so the musical form does not need to follow any strictures set by rhyme (i, 184).

[52] D'Harcourt, I, 276-77.

[53] *Ibid.*, I, 467.

[54] *Ibid.*, I, 292-94.

meaningless by themselves, and works them into the fabric of his surrealistic French verse and then into the fabric of his music.

The d'Harcourts' discussion of Peruvian folklore is thus essential to our understanding of Messiaen's _Harawi_, which utilizes the _colombe verte_ (dove) as a central image or metaphor which stands for the Loved One. The d'Harcourts indicate that no bird is used in any literature with more consistency than the dove is used in Quechua poetry, and it is there normally associated with unhappy love (because of the sad roulades of its song) and, as we have noted above, with infidelity.[55] One of the songs in the Peruvian music drama _Ollantay_, also pre-Conquest in origin, presents a story of two doves or pigeons, one of which flies away, leaving its companion alone in the nest.[56] Rostand says that Messiaen equates the _colombe verte_ with the _bien-aimée_,[57] and we find this equation especially in Song V of _Harawi_ where the _colombe verte_ is the _jeune fille_ whose love call is answered by _jeune homme_. But the remainder of the equation, _colombe verte_=_bien-aimée_=Piroutcha (Quechua: Piruça)=Isolde (Yseult) need not only be surmised, for Messiaen himself has stated that in his _Harawi_ "Isolde is called Piroutcha."[58]

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[55] _Ibid._, I, 190. The use of _colombe verte_ has the connotation of "loved one " in French. For this point, I am indebted to Dr. Robert Laudon.

[56] _Ibid._, I, 190.

[57] Rostand, _Olivier Messiaen_, pp. 35-36.

[58] Goléa, _Rencontrez_, p. 150.

There are some problems, as Messiaen himself has noted, in combining folkloric materials "in music called savante"--i.e., learned or consciously composed music.[59] Messiaen indicates that

> there are two methods of using folklore: a purely imitative method which consists largely of utilizing known popular themes, and a creative method which consists, in the manner of De Falla or of Bartok, of creating the atmosphere of the popular music by consciously using the modes and adapted rhythms. In Harawi, I have done neither one nor the other, but a completely different thing.[60]

Messiaen's solution is to transform melodic and rhythmic borrowings into his own modes of limited transposition and his own non-retrogradable rhythms.

The result, then, is nothing very much like the harawi as sung in Peru,[61] for, as noted above, Messiaen has cast these folk materials into the mold of his own musical language. His musical language is, of course, directly descended from Wagner and Debussy--both composers to whom he also is indebted for mythic and narrative materials. His relationship to Wagner has not surprisingly been the subject of discussion by a number of critics.

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[59] Ibid., p. 149.

[60] Ibid. (italics mine).

[61] See the example of a yaravi on the recording L'ame musicale du Perou (BAM LD-5442), Side 1, Band 2. See also Music of Peru (Folkways 415).

Arnold Whittall has said that "He [Messiaen] has used images of sensuality more directly than Wagner--as in 'Cinq Rechants'--but his forms have become more severely controlled."[62] No one has denied the presence of "images of sensuality" in Messiaen's music, though the amount of control exercised by him has been disputed. Roger Smalley writes that Messiaen's

> music possesses an uninhibited appetite for gargantuan emotional excess on a Wagnerian scale, and it would seem that the inspiration of Messiaen's interpretation of the Tristan legend...owes as much to Wagner's (*Tristan und Isolde*) as to Debussy's (*Pelleas et Melisande*).[63]

As Smalley further comments, in Messiaen's work "the emotional scope of Wagner is wedded to a musical language derived from Debussy."[64]

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[62] Arnold Whittall, "Stravinsky and Music Drama," *Music and Letters*, L (1969), 66.

[63] Smalley, "Debussy and Messiaen," p. 128. As has been commonly noted by many writers, Messiaen has seen the story of *Pelléas et Mélisande* as an analogue to the Tristan story and may have incorporated some details from the dialogue of Debussy's opera, for which Maeterlinck provided the libretto. For example, in Act III, Scene i of *Pelléas et Mélisande* the beautiful long hair of Melisande falls from the window and entangles Pelleas in its locks, and just at that moment two doves--the birds of Venus in medieval secular iconography --fly about the tower. The falling hair is echoed in *Harawi*, where in Song X the head is reversed under the heavens and the hands reach up to touch the entangling hair. The dove, which appears as the *colombe verte* from Peruvian lore, also has a long history as an erotic symbol in the West. See the doves as the team of Venus in the *Roman de la Rose*, especially as illustrated in Harley MS. 4425, fol. 138 verso.

[64] Smalley, "Debussy and Messiaen," p. 128.

The Technique of My Musical Language is replete with references to specific traits of Debussy's style which influence Messiaen's practice. Messiaen shows how he has taken, for example, a melodic phrase from Debussy and has used it as a "point of departure" for a new "melodic contour" in his songs "L'Épouse" and "Paysage" in Poèmes pour Mi, in "Combat de la Mort et de la Vie" in Les Corps Glorieux, and elsewhere.[65] But more specific musical techniques are also taken from Debussy, as in the case of "the added sixth in the perfect chord, foreseen by Rameau and established by Debussy."[66] Messiaen further amplifies this point:

> With the advent of Claude Debussy, one spoke of appoggiaturas without resolution, of passing notes with no issue, etc. In fact, one found them in his first works. In Pélléas et Mélisande, les Estampes, les Préludes, and les Images for the piano, it is a question of foreign notes, with neither preparation nor resolution, without particular expressive accent, which tranquilly make a part of the chord, changing its color, giving it a spice, a new perfume.[67]

And ultimately even Messiaen's modes of limited transposition are traceable in part to Debussy's use of the whole tone scale.[68]

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[65] Technique of My Musical Language, I, 32; vol. II, exs. 85-89; cf. Smalley, "Debussy and Messiaen," p. 128. On Debussy's use of melody, see Martin Cooper, French Music from the Death of Berlioz to the Death of Fauré (London: Oxford Univ. Press, 1951), p. 97.

[66] Technique of My Musical Language, I. 31.

[67] Ibid., I, 47.

From the standpoint of structure, Messiaen's compositions, like Debussy's, are essentially cumulative or additive rather than developmental in the Germanic fashion.[69] When Messiaen departs from his usual practice in order to attempt an extended development section, as in the eighth movement, "Développement de l'amour," of Turangalîla, he can be splendidly successful, achieving in the latter part of the movement what David Drew has called "one of the most masterly things in the work."[70] In even the earlier part of "Développement de l'amour," however, he relies heavily on his more usual cumulative method.[71] Messiaen's way of accumulating segments takes on the unity of cyclical form--a treatment of form usually associated with Franck, d'Indy, and their disciples.[72]

Typically, Messiaen calls his work in one instance a "harmonic tapestry."[73] The metaphor is an apt description of his work in a broader sense, however, for like a tapestry it weaves together myth, poetry, and music. In his cumulative fashion, he links together in his verses ideas and images, as noted above. Furthermore, images and ideas are brought back again and again in the individual work, as in the case of the "four lizards" in the second part of Cinq Rechants who appear again in Part V of the same composition. Then musically he uses linking themes which appear and re-appear, as in Songs II, VII, IX, and X~~I~~I of Harawi. Similarly, in Turangalîla-Symphonie, the statue, flower, and love themes return again and again. Thus a degree of unity is given to his composition by such linkages.

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[68] Smalley, "Debussy and Messiaen," p. 129; Antoine Goléa, "French Music since 1945, Musical Quarterly, LI (1965), 23.

[69] Cf. Smalley, "Debussy and Messiaen," p. 129.

[70] David Drew, "Messiaen--A Provisional Study (III)," The Score and I.M.A. Magazine, No. 14 (Dec. 1955), p. 55.

[71] See ibid. for Drew's comment "Nor is there much to be said in favour of the tedious repetitive pattern of the first part of the eighth movement..." (p. 55). See also Smalley, "Debussy and Messiaen," p. 129. The eighth movement of Turangalîla-Symphonie is also discussed by Leonard Burkat in Musical Quarterly, XXXVI, (1950), 266.

[72] Cooper, p. 48.

[73] Technique of My Musical Language, I, 39.

Another technical device which functions to promote unity in Harawi and Turangalîla-Symphonie, but almost not at all in Cinq Rechants, is Messiaen's way of linking chords through a common tone in a long series of either ascending or descending passages. I have called this device enchainment, since no ready-made term seems to fit Messiaen's practice of using the device with such great persistency and regularity. I derive this term from a hint in Messiaen's own poetry, which uses the words enchainée and chaînes as part of an important pattern of imagery in Harawi (Songs, II, V, X).

At this point it would seem appropriate to present some discussion of Messiaen's musical language as described in his Technique of My Musical Language (1944) and as utilized in his

Tristan trilogy. The Technique of My Musical Language is an indispensable guide to his principles of composition up to the date of its publication, and also provides a basis for understanding the later works. In it he summarizes his structural, melodic, rhythmic, and harmonic practices, and gives copious examples from his own work to illustrate his points. The following introduction to his musical language is hence set forth here as a necessary prelude to the discussion of the Tristan trilogy in the following chapters.

I. Structure

Analysis of Messiaen's practice shows that his compositions combine similar and dissimilar materials and that hence they are in some sense to be regarded as segmental or episodic structures. Traditional forms such as the fugue and sonata are not entirely rejected. However, in his discussion of the fugue, he indicates that he will retain only the episode and the stretto.[74] Speaking of the sonata, he claims that the recapitulation is absolutely "obsolete" and that he will retain only the development, which he divides into "middle, modulating and terminal."[75]

The use of development as a technique in the "Développement de l'amour" in Turangalîla-Symphonie has been noted above. In Harawi, a different kind of development, however, is very often present--a type which Messiaen calls "development by elimination."[76]

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[74] Technique of My Musical Language, I, 40.

[75] Ibid., I, 40.

[76] Ibid., I, 41.

In his chapter on Melodic Development in The Technique of My Musical Language, he suggests that this type may be traced to Beethoven. It is a "procedure," says Messiaen, which "is at the basis of all thematic life. It consists of repeating a fragment of the theme, taking away from it successively a part of its notes up to concentration upon itself, reduction to a schematic state, shrunken by strife, by crisis."[77] Practically, the way this procedure works out is as follows: a theme is presented in its original form a number of times or with slight changes, but near the end of the work, the first half of the theme will appear, then later the last half, again the first half (and so on) until the last appearance of the fragmented theme, which may only be a reminiscence of it in the form of its last two notes--two notes that also may be the last two notes of the section or movement, as in Song VI of Harawi. A piano epilogue may or may not follow this bit of theme, but whether or not it does, the listener gains the impression that the small bit of theme ("developed by elimination") has had the last word. There is, however, no way to make a system of Messiaen's use of development by elimination, thereby guessing in advance how often the theme will return in its original form or what parts will be eliminated or retained. He reserves the right to use this device in no slavish manner, but utilizes it artistically as the materials and form seem to require.

Another way of creating structure is through the imitation of plainchant forms, with which Messiaen is deeply acquainted. For many years in his role as church organist, he has improvised on plainchant melodies at high Mass on Sunday. Thus the forms of the chants themselves have become imprinted on his mind and imagination. The "Antienne du Silence" of the cycle *Chants de Terre et de Ciel* is written, says Messiaen, in the form of an anthem, and "Resurrection," from the same cycle, is an "alleluiatic vocalise."[78]

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[77] Ibid., I, 35.

The chapter in *The Technique of My Musical Language* which applies most directly to the first work in the trilogy, *Harawi*, is the one which discusses the song-sentence. According to Messiaen, a "musical sentence is a succession of periods. The theme is the synthesis of the elements contained in the sentence, of which it generally constitutes the first period."[79] The sentence, then, consists of several of these periods, which may be combined in various ways. In the song-sentence proper, there are three parts: (1) the theme, consisting of antecedent and consequence; (2) "a middle period inflecting toward the dominant"; and (3) "a final period," which is "an issue [i.e., result] of the theme."[80] This *additive* method of linking themes and/or periods and of creating full sentences is one which we have already observed and which we will observe again, especially in *Harawi*.

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[78] *Ibid.*, I, 44.

[79] *Ibid.*, I, 37.

[80] *Ibid.*, I, 37.

Other song forms used by Messiaen are the binary sentence and the ternary sentence. The binary sentence possesses (1) theme, (2) "first commentary," (3) theme, and (4) "second commentary." The ternary sentence is comprised of (1) theme and its consequent, (2) commentary and its consequent, and (3) theme and its consequent.[81] The term "commentary" seems particularly apt for Messiaen in the light of his literary interests, and it describes well his kind of development in which "fragments of the theme are repeated in the same key on different degrees or in other keys."[82] Usually his developments do not seem to go anywhere: the idea that music ought to progress is rejected by Messiaen. The climaxes in Messiaen's music (when he allows this phenomenon to occur) are achieved in much the same manner that Renaissance writers on and practitioners of rhetoric said it might be achieved in written and spoken language--by means of piling up a great number of repetitions and by speeding up the tempo, while increasing the dynamic level.[83]

II. Melody

Messiaen's melodic practices, especially his "modal" theories, are well known through his own commentaries and also through other critics' analyses. His modes can be readily grasped and partially comprehended without delving further into his other theories. Yet is should be remembered that his modal theory is only one element, and that there are many other facets of his melodic practice. It is also necessary to note here that Messiaen does not use his modes with absolute consistency in Harawi, Turangalîla-Symphonie, or Cinq Rechants.

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[81] *Ibid.*, I, 38.

[82] *Ibid.*, I, 38

[83] The practice is very well illustrated within each of the scenes of Christopher Marlowe's *Tamburlaine*, Parts I and II.

Briefly, Messiaen delineates seven modes. Though these are not in all cases original to him, his systematization of them is unique. The first is the whole-tone scale, already exploited by Debussy and Paul Dukas. Messiaen takes the theory one step further by delineating the only two possible transpositions of this scale (further transpositions are enharmonically identical to the first two).[84] In this mode there are six groups of two notes, each group being connected by common tone. (Appendix, example 1). He indicates that he avoids this mode for the most part and, when he does use it, he disguises it.

The second mode is a pattern of alternating whole and half steps--one half step followed by a whole step, and so forth. This mode has four compact groups, each group having three notes (Appendix, example 2). The mode as a whole has three possible transpositions. Messiaen, who disclaims any originality in having discovered this mode, indicates that it has been used previously, at least in part, by Rimsky-Korsakov, Scriabin, Ravel, and Stravinsky. Messiaen very often associates colors and sounds, and this mode is identified by him as "blue-violet in color."[85]

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[84] Technique of My Musical Language, I, 59.

[85] Samuel, p. 42. Messiaen has long been interested in the phenomenon of synesthesia. In 1931, as Mari, p. 25, notes,

Mode 3 consists of a pattern of a whole step followed by two half steps, and so forth. This mode has three groups of four notes, and can be transposed four times.[86] (Appendix, example 3) It has for Messiaen the associations of the colors "orange with pigmentations of red and green, touches of gold and the milky whiteness, like opals, of the reflections of irises."[87]

Mode 4 has two groups of five notes each, each group consisting of the following pattern of whole and half steps: half, half, whole plus half (minor third), and half step (Appendix, example 4). Mode 5 has two groups of four notes each, each group being made up of the following pattern: half, two wholes (major third), half step (Appendix, example 5). Mode 6 again has two groups of five notes, in the following pattern: whole, whole, half, half step (Appendix, example 6). Finally, Mode 7 has two groups of six notes each, with the pattern of half, half, half, whole, and half step (Appendix, example 7). Each of these modes can be transposed six times, as Messiaen notes, "like the interval of the augmented

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"Messiaen established, under the influence of the painter Blanc Gatti, the correspondence of colors and sounds." But it was not until he was in a prison camp during World War II that, frozen and starved, he himself received the "gift" of being able to perceive sounds as colors. Messiaen seems to have retained this ability after his repatriation. Since he particularly likes the colors of blue and violet (Samuel, p. 42), it is safe to infer that he likes Mode 2 as well. But in his schematic understanding of the relationships between sounds and colors, other ideas, sometimes traditional, also intrude. For example. for Messiaen, the color purple means love of truth, while hyacinth (with more blue) means the truth of love. See also the interesting article by Robert Long, "The Color of Sound," High Fidelity, XXI, No. 3, (March 1971), 54-65.

[86] *Technique of My Musical Language*, I, 60.

[87] Samuel, p. 42.

fourth."[88] He confesses that he does not care as much for these last four modes since they are transposable so many times that they lose their "charm of the impossibilities" which he likes so much in Modes 2 and 3. It is the charm that he also finds in his non-retrogradable rhythms with their built-in limitations. He believes that the limitations themselves provide a kind of "theological rainbow,"[89] a metaphor which can be explained not in terms of logical concepts, but only in terms of the sounds Messiaen achieves in his music.

Since Messiaen seldom uses these last four modes and usually avoids Mode 1, Modes 2 and 3 remain as the most frequently used for his compositions. However, as will be evident in the analysis of *Harawi*, *Turangalîla-Symphonie*, and *Cinq Rechants*, Messiaen in these works often uses no discernible mode at all, or he uses a fully chromatic scale (which, he insists, is a genuine system[90]) more often than he uses one of his own modes. Even though in his *Technique of My Musical Language* he praises "the charm of the impossibilities," the modes must have become somewhat constricting for Messiaen by the time of the post-war period in which he composed his Tristan trilogy. We may note that the modal system, however, had provided a real solution to a compositional impasse that had been recognized by Messiaen in the mid-thirties;[91] for some of his students, a tight system became more than a temporary solution, since both Pierre Boulez and Jean Barraque have gone into partial or total serialism.

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[88] *Technique of My Musical Language*, I, 61.

[89] *Ibid*., I, 61-63.

[90] Samuel, p. 50.

It goes without saying that Messiaen feels free to combine modes; for example, he may have the vocal line in Mode 2, the right hand of the piano part in Mode 3, and the left hand in a chromatic scale. He insists, however, that his mélange is not polytonal, but rather is "in the atmosphere of several tonalities at once."[92] When he uses two modes at once, he speaks of "superposition of modes" or of "polymodality."[93] Whether this is hair-splitting or not, we must respect the right of Messiaen to distinguish the terms he wishes for description of his work. However, as will be noted below, I have taken the liberty of labelling some chords "polytonal" when such designation seems appropriate to me.

Messiaen, in addition to the modes, has a few "stock" melodic devices which he regularly uses. These include the intervals of the descending augmented fourth and the descending major sixth, as well as a melodic pattern based on the first five notes of the Coronation scene of Mussorgsky's Boris Godounov,[94] used in the first notes of the last movement of *Et Expecto Resurrectionem Mortuorem* (1965). But as Messiaen uses the notes, they have been "passed through the deforming prism of our [musical] language."[95]

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[91] See Waumsley, pp. 10, 20.

[92] Technique of My Musical Language, I, 67.

[93] Ibid., I, 68.

[94] Ibid., I, 31; vol. II, ex. 75. See also Heinz Werner Zimmermann, "The Technique of Messiaen's 'La Nativité du Seigneur',"

But one of Messiaen's most original contributions to the melody of modern music is achieved through his persistence in noting down bird songs, transforming them through his art, and placing them within the context of his vocal, piano, organ, chamber, and orchestral works. I call this contribution "original" even though for centuries there have been imitators of bird song in music--among them, Jannequin, Couperin, Händel, Daquin, and even Beethoven, whose imitation of the cuckoo in the *Pastoral Symphony* is so well known. But in his devotion to bird songs and his care in notating them as faithfully as possible, Messiaen has done something unparalleled in the history of music. He speaks slightingly of some of his predecessors for their inability to write credible bird songs. For example, he has said, "I think that Couperin... never heard a nightingale."[96] Messiaen, on the contrary, has not

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trans. Audrey Davidson, in *Universitas: A Journal of Religion and the University* (Detroit), IV (1966), 131-32.

[95] *Technique of My Musical Language*, I, 39.

[96] Samuel, p. 117. Messiaen's close observation of birds has brought him to the following conclusions: that birds sing for three reasons, as an expression of love, as a way of defending their territory, and as a salutation to the dawn and dusk--and they sing for the sheer pleasure of singing. Birds, he says, are technicians and artists. See Samuel, p. 96, and Mari, p. 52. He further notes that each species of bird has its own characteristic song (e.g., the blackbird has a theme utilizing intervals of a major third, perfect fourth, major sixth, and an augmented fourth), but that each individual bird, like a human composer, also invents

only listened to countless birds but has truly heard them. At first he went out alone, armed with binoculars but spurning the tape recorder. On these first forays, he patiently, hour upon hour, listened to and observed birds of the French countryside. In order to fill in the gaps in his knowledge of birds, he sought out the company of noted ornithologists, who then accompanied him on some of his walks. Later he was able to travel to other countries where he has observed native birds in their natural habitat.[97]

He has learned to notate a bird's song even while the bird itself has gone on to a new melodic phrase; thus he will be at once writing what he had previously heard and hearing the new material, which in turn he will jot down as quickly as he can get to it. The two qualities that are absolutely essential for notating bird songs, according to Messiaen, are patience and a very good ear. He also notes that listening to birds is mentally fatiguing.[98] What might have begun as a pleasant escape from urban life and as a means of healing the spirit weary of the city has become an intense way of working.[99]

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his own themes and creates a certain number of new themes each year. He also believes that some birds do not seem to have any innate songs, but must learn all of their songs. See Samuel, p. 99.

[97] Ibid., pp. 107-08, 111.

[98] Ibid., p. 112.

[99] See De Quénetain, p. 12: "If Messiaen takes refuge in birds, waterfalls and mountains, it is because he has pessimistic views of the evolution of his art and of humanity. In 1958 he proclaimed

Messiaen is not, of course, able to use the melodies of birds in the form in which they have been collected. He claims that since "birds are smaller than we are, their hearts beat more rapidly and their nervous reactions more rapid than ours, they sing in an excessively fast tempo, absolutely impossible for our instruments; I am obliged therefore to transcribe their songs in a tempo less rapid." He adds that birds also sing higher than our instruments can play, so he is therefore compelled to write the songs "one, two, three, or even four octaves lower" than he has heard them.[100] It is also necessary for him to suppress the microtonal intervals which "our instruments" cannot reproduce, and he is forced to substitute semi-tones for the smaller intervals.[101]

The compositions of Messiaen thus utilize bird-song materials in two ways. He says that he "has adopted two attitudes: I write 'exact' pieces and 'resemblances'."[102] The exact pieces and resemblances alike take into consideration the time of day or night the birds were "recorded" and preserve the natural succession of

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in Brussels: 'When all seems lost, so that we no longer recognize the road...toward which master shall we turn, which "daemon" shall we call upon to find our way out of the abyss? With so many opposite schools, outmoded styles and contradictory languages, there is no human music to give confidence to the despairing. It is here that Nature intervenes'."

[100] Samuel, p. 113.

[101] *Ibid.*, p. 114.

[102] *Ibid.*, p. 114.

the proper time of singing. But in other works Messiaen "manipulates" his material as do composers of electronic music and musique concrète. He concludes that "this method is less honest in regards to nature but more honest in regards to the work of the composer. I think both attitudes are valuable."[103] In any case, bird song becomes as important for him as is the Leitmotiv for Wagner.[104]

III. Harmony

Although Rameau, Messiaen's countryman of an earlier period, had declared that "Melody is born of harmony,"[105] Messiaen's harmonies seem on the contrary to be often born of his melodic practices. At least in his "polymodal" passages, where the chords in each hand of the piano part are in two different modes, the melodic origin of his harmonies can be ascertained. Just as twelve-tone composers have been able to use a tone row vertically as well as horizontally, so Messiaen turns his modes into vertical sonorities to create shimmering chords that have the effect of stained glass windows.[106]

David Drew, who also seems to have perceived the melodic sources of Messiaen's harmonies, indicates that of the two basic kinds of chords which the composer builds, the first (chords with added tones) is definitely based on the added augmented fourth and the added sixth, both important intervals in his melodic practice.[107] For the second kind of chord recognized by Drew (the chord created by means of superposition of intervals), the melodic origins are less clear, unless we look at these chords as compilations of piled-up seconds (both major and minor), thirds, fourths, fifths, and, on occasion, larger intervals. In Harawi, Messiaen builds "chords" made up of open fifths and sixths played against one another to good effect, as in the introductory measures of "Montagnes."

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[103] Ibid., p. 114.

[104] Ibid., p. 97.

[105] Quoted by Wilfrid Mellers in his article on Rameau in Grove's Dictionary of Music and Musicians, ed. Eric Blom, 10th ed. (London: Macmillan, 1954), VII, 33.

[106] Technique of My Musical Language, I, 50.

Messiaen's chords of superposition become quite thick and complex and they take on the quality of polymodality; for example, an eleventh chord with one tonal center may be pitted against an altered ninth chord with a different tonal center. Some of his chords have so many foreign notes that they cannot be analyzed in either tertian or quartal harmony, and must be described as chords which have given themselves up to total chromaticism or atonality.[108]

One of Messiaen's favorite chords is the familiar thirteenth chord, though when it is arranged in the fashion which he prefers, he calls it "the chord of the dominant," consisting of g, a, c',

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[107] Drew, pt. I, Score, No. 10 (Dec. 1954), p. 39.

[108] See Technique of My Musical Language, I, 67 for a discussion by Messiaen concerning the combination of his modes with atonal music.

d' (left hand), and f', b', e'' (right hand).[109] Thus when he wants to refer to the ordinary dominant seventh, he specifically labels it "the dominant seventh." His other favorite chord may be considered one of the chords of superposition, but actually he tells us what its true origin is; it is derived, he says, from "all tones perceptible, to an extremely fine ear, in the resonance of low C."[110] This chord is called, logically, "the chord of resonance," and is made up of the notes c', e', g', and $b^{b'}$ in the left hand, and d'', $f\#''$, $g\#''$, and b'' in the right hand.[111] Messiaen's chord of resonance seems to have the same significance for him that Scriabin's mystic chord held for the Russian composer.[112]

Messiaen's chord progressions, as we have noted, do not generally progress; it is more accurate, therefore, to speak of "enchainments" or "connections" of chords. And these are true connections, in that very often Messiaen will build a series of chords which are linked by at least one tone common to each chord in the series; for example, in Mode 2, in an ascending pattern, the 6/4 chord with added augmented fourth will be followed by a dominant seventh (conventional, not Messiaen's thirteenth) with an added sixth.[113]

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[109] _Ibid_., I, 50.

[110] _Ibid_., I, 50.

[111] _Ibid_., I, 50; vol. II, ex. 208.

[112] See _ibid_., I, 59; Samuel, p. 39. Messiaen speaks with favor of Scriabin's modal practice and of his interest in the correspondences of colors and sounds.

[113] Drew, pt. I, p. 40.

As one of his possible ways of creating chord connections, Messiaen mentions the harmonic litany, which "is a melodic fragment of two or several notes repeated with different harmonizations."[114] Needless to say, these repeated melodies with different harmonies are rather static. But beyond this, Messiaen provides entire lists of possible connections as well as examples of each type of connection. It appears that these chord connections provide a ready-made store for Messiaen to draw upon when he needs a set of chords, with the attendant danger that the listener may become bored when such material becomes over-used. But upon repeated hearings, Messiaen's chords, which are very thick and complex, are revealed to be possessed of infinite variety. In the Tristan trilogy, each song, movement, or rechant contains so many chords, connected so differently in each piece, that each sounds distinctively different than every other piece.

Messiaen himself notes the complex nature of his chords, and raises the question as to whether in his style there can be anything like a foreign note.[115] He comes to the conclusion that a dissonant "note" is scarcely to be isolated when there is so much dissonance present, but he would like to be able to retain the concept of foreign tones by a process he calls "enlarging." He enlarges the single foreign note (which cannot be noticed or found) to a group of foreign notes; thus, the pedal note will become a pedal group, the passing note will become a passing group, and embellishments will become the embellishment group. He says that the anticipation and escape note are absorbed into his theory of added notes, and in his work the suspension becomes the appoggiatura. The appoggiatura, which is transformed into something most complex under Messiaen's touch, is made up of three parts, upbeat, accent, and termination. Unlike the traditional appoggiatura, Messiaen's version consists of multiple chords, with the upbeat encompassing ten chords, the accent two chords, and the termination three chords in the example from his "Amen de l'agonie de Jesus" which he provides in The Technique of My Musical Language.[116]

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[114] Technique of My Musical Language, I, 53.

[115] Ibid., I, 55.

A final point concerning modulation needs to be made. Messiaen devotes one chapter in his Technique of My Musical Language to this topic, but in actual practice his modulations are rare and, as Drew notes, when one occurs "after a lengthy passage of static harmony, the effect is analogous to that of the modulation to E major at the end of Ravel's Bolero.[117]

IV. Rhythm

When asked by Claude Samuel to give a simple definition of his rhythmic language, Messiaen said that rhythm is the one thing in music for which there could be no simple definition.[118] But in practice his rhythmic language is a synthesis of a number of elements; like his melodic and harmonic practice, it is a mélange, as he himself admitted in another portion of the interview with Samuel. It has evolved and is, like his chords, the result of superposed elements: "tout cela y évolvue, est mélangé et superposé."[119]

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[116] Ibid., vol. II, ex. 308.

[117] Drew, pt. I, p. 38.

[118] Samuel, p. 65.

Messiaen's intense interest in rhythm goes gack to his teacher, Maurice Emmanuel, whom he assisted in a course based entirely on Greek metrics--a factor which influences Messiaen's work to this day. Marcel Dupré, with whom he studied organ, also reinforced this interest by having him improvise on Greek rhythmic patterns.[120] Greek metrics, in contrast to English meters which are based on word accent (i.e., based on a combination of pitch and stress in the language), are essentially quantitative; they consist, as Messiaen explains, of "a simple but essential principle; they are composed of short and long values, the shorts being equal to each other and the longs being equal to two shorts."[121] The practical application of these patterns in his own work is not easy to demonstrate; suffice it to say that all patterns become amalgamated into his unified rhythmic language and that certain Greek formulae can be interpreted as either added values or as non-retrogradable rhythms.

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[119] Ibid., p. 88.

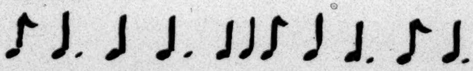
[120] Besides the work of Emmanuel and Dupré, Messiaen utilized one further source for his information about Greek metrics; this was Claude le Jeune's Preface to Le Printemps in which he, under the influence of Jean-Antoine de Baïf's theories, defended the principles of setting French quantitatively to music. See Samuel, p. 78.

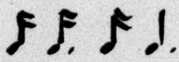
[121] Ibid., p. 76. Messiaen gives some examples of patterns to be found in Greek poetry:
Cretan: consists of long-short-long
Bacchius: consists of short-long-long
Antibacchius: consists of long-long-short
See Samuel, p. 78.

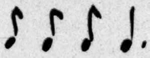
For Messiaen, Greek rhythms have thus become one element in a rhythmic language made up of many elements. Hence Greek rhythms had to be brought into a compatible relationship, for example, with his handling of plainchant melodies. He speculates, therefore, that Greek metrics had led historically into the traditions of plainchant in the form of the rising and fall accents, arsis and thesis. For his theories on plainchant, he is indebted to the work of Dom Mocquereau of the now somewhat out-of-fashion Solemnes school.

The ametrical aspect of Messiaen's music has yet another source. From the analysis of Stravinsky's Rite of Spring which he made at the age of twenty-two but which has remained in his memory up to the present, Messiaen seized on the idea of constantly changing meters, and made them one of the marks of his style. He goes further than Stravinsky did in the Rite of Spring, since in Harawi he does away with time signatures to signal the changes and since he moves fluidly from one passage which has bar-lines to a completely rhapsodic passage (usually depicting bird song) without bar-lines, then returns to the barred measures with varying numbers of beats in them. The measures themselves are often justifiable on the basis of a duple or a triple rhythmic foundation but, just as often, the added values are so small as to throw the measure into a completely irrational and fractional number of beats. In contrast to the ametrical character of many measures of *Harawi*, however, everything is measured tightly in *Turangalila-Symphonie* and *Cinq Rechants*.

Besides Greek metrics, plainchant rhythms, and an ametricism inspired by Stravinsky, Messiaen has another, even more exotic source for his rhythmic language: North Indian rhythms as found in the writings of the thirteenth-century theorist Çarngedeva.[122] Messiaen says that he was aided initially in his understanding of the 120 *deçi-talas* by a Hundu friend, who elucidated the Sanskrit symbols.[123] Of the 120 *deçi-talas*, he has a few favorite patterns to which he refers with affection:[124]

(1) simhavikrîdita: 

(2) râgavardhana: 

(3) gajalila: 

Messiaen not only takes the actual Indian rhythms into his compositions, but he finds in them concepts which transform his entire rhythmic language. From the fact that Indian music is essentially additive rather than divisive, as is Western music, he borrows the idea of the added time values, to which reference has been made above. From the rhythm of the *râgavardhana*, he derives rhythms which are identical both forward and in retrograde form. These rhythms, so much like the literary *palindrome* (e.g., "Able was I ere I saw Elba"), are referred to as non-retrogradable since, as pointed out, they are the same whether they proceed forward or backward. These non-retrogradable rhythms are a very important feature of Messiaen's rhythmic language. The Indian and non-retrogradable rhythms both work to produce the same timeless quality as plainchant, and thereby they reinforce Messiaen's already marked tendency toward a more static, non-progressing rhythm.

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[122] See the article on Indian music by Joanny Grosset in *Encyclopédie de la musique et dictionnaire du conservatoire*, ed. A. Lavignac (Paris: Delagrave, 1913-31), Vol. I, pt 1; see especially pp. 287-324.

[123] Samuel, p. 84.

[124] *Technique of My Musical Language*, Vol. II, exs. 2-3; Çarngadeva as cited by Grosset, pp. 301, 303. See also Samuel, p.85.

The Indian rhythms have an intrinsic beauty of their own, but he perhaps makes of them something even more rich and strange when he synthesizes them with other rhythmic patterns. He uses the *tala râgavardhana* in its retrograde form as the rhythmic pattern for the violins and violas in the body of the first movement of the *Turangalîla-Symphonie*; the pattern, repeated thirteen and one-half times, is woven into the fabric of four other rhythmic schemes in the woodwinds, brass, gamelan (consisting of vibraphone, celesta, and keyed glockenspiel), and percussion, respectively.[125]

Messiaen's theory of added values becomes extremely complex, especially when related to his complicated theory of foreign notes. It has been noted above that his foreign notes actually had to become foreign groups to be noticed in the sea of dissonances, and that these foreign groups consisted of the tripartite form of upbeat, accent, and termination. Messiaen shows how his added values, used in these foreign groups, have the aesthetic effect of either delaying or accelerating the movement of a sequence of notes. (A short added value will cause the melodic sequence to accelerate, and a longer added value will delay or prolong the sequence.)[126]

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[125] *Turangalîla-Symphonie* (Paris: Durand, n.d.) pp. 16-32.

Although he is adept at using the traditional learned devices of fugal writing--i.e., of augmentation and diminution--he nevertheless marks these also with his own special traits. Joining the learned devices to his additive theories, he creates augmentations by various additions--e.g., augmentation by "addition of a quarter of the values" or by "addition of a third of the values."[127] He uses "classic augmentation, or addition of the values to themselves."[128] And just as augmentation is created through addition, so also is diminution achieved by "withdrawal"--for example, by "withdrawal of a fifth of the values" or by "withdrawal of a quarter of the values."[129] The composer notes that one can only go so far in these super-subtle augmentations and diminutions; beyond a certain point, the ear no longer perceives the effects.

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[126] See Technique of My Musical Language, I, 17.

[127] Ibid., I, 18.

[128] Ibid., I, 18.

[129] Ibid., I, 18.

One exceedingly complex use of diminution by withdrawal is found in the passage of Turangalîla-Symphonie noted above, this time in the percussion part, specifically in the notes played by the Chinese cymbal. These notes are "diminished successively by the value of one sixteenth note."[130]

The combination of the five rhythms in the first movement of Turangalîla-Symphonie constitutes only one example of Messiaen's use of polyrhythms or what he calls "superposition" of rhythms, one upon the other. In his Technique of My Musical Language, he speaks of superposing "rhythms of unequal length" in which the shorter pattern in one hand of a piano piece will be repeated more times, while the longer pattern in the other hand will be repeated fewer times, both closing together on a "return to the combination of departure."[131] This seems very similar to medieval and renaissance isorhythmic practice, with the difference that in the earlier music both color and talea would be played off against one another. Messiaen's rhythmic complexity has been rightly compared with Guillaume de Machaut's isorhythms.[132] One wonderful superposition of rhythm that Messiaen uses in "Montagnes," Song

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[130] Burkat, p. 262. See also Drew, pt. 3, p. 52, who calls this type of diminution "chromatic rhythms."

[131] Techniques of My Musical Language, I, 22.

[132] Drew, pt. 3, p. 52.

III of the Harawi cycle, has the rhythmic pattern beginning at measure 14 in the right hand, running forward; the left hand of the piano part has the same pattern, running from measure 23 to measure 14 in retrograde fashion. The two voices meet and cross at the middle measure of the section, with the two voices exchanging the same rhythmic pattern in a kind of Stimmtausch. The eye perceives that this elaborate kind of exchange has occurred, but does the ear? Messiaen admits that many of his devices, such as non-retrogradable rhythms and modes of limited transpositions, are not perceptible by the auditor as such. He says that a listener "will not have time at the concert to inspect" such technical aspects, but he will be "charmed" nonetheless.[133] So even if, for example, the rigorously intellectual aspects of the rhythmic device in "Montagnes" are perceptible only to the eye, the ear (unless aided by the score) will hear it as jumbles of shimmering sound.

Other learned devices of which Messiaen is the master include what he calls "rhythmic canon" and "rhythmic pedal." In the rhythmic canon, themes do not enter successively with imitations at the interval of a fourth, fifth, or octave, but rather in a rhythmic pattern is stated in one voice and then imitated in another voice (in a piano work, the first statement may be in the right hand and the imitation in the left hand) at the interval of a beat, several beats, or even a measure. The pattern may be either imitated as it is, or changed by the means of augmentation and/or diminution. Rhythmic canon appears in "Épouvante" in *Poèmes pour Mi* and also in the third movement of *Turangalîla-Symphonie* in the horn and violon-cello parts.[134] The listener rarely is able to perceive the complex pattern in these instances as canon, but rather as a forest of rhythms. The eye, of course, perceives it as *Augen-musik* much in the way one perceives the learned devices of the mannered Baude Cordier.

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[133] Technique of My Musical Language, I, 21. Some of Messiaen's pronouncements on the listener's ability to hear his rhythms are more severe. Regarding the sixty-four durations in Livre d'orgue, he says: "Finally, I have always deplored as an obstacle to the study of rhythm the weakness of human perception in regard to very long and very short time values.... Many musicians cannot perceive time-values or average length when they exceed, in one direction or the other, simple arithmetical dimensions. And the slight differences between two long values are even more difficult to hear. I dared to take a step forward in this field when I wrote the 'Sixty-four time-values' which conclude my Livre d'Orgue. If I can think them, read them, play them, and hear them, all sixty-four, with their differences, others should be able to" (Lecture at Exposition Internationale de Bruxelles, 1958, as quoted in Waumsley, p. 49).

The rhythmic pedal consists of a rhythm "which repeats itself indefatigably, in ostinato...without busying itself about the rhythms which surround it."[135] In addition to its rhythmic independence, the rhythmic pedal is also independent of any compulsion to repeat a melodic or harmonic pattern (hence Drew calls it an "ambivalent ostinato," since it is cut free from the melodic repetition of "normal" ostinatos[136]), although it does not necessarily eschew such repetition in every instance. In the example cited by Messiaen from the "Crystalline Liturgy" of his Quartet for the End of Time, one of the rhythmic pedals (in the violoncello part) retains its first melody when the ostinato rhythm repeats, but the other rhythmic pedal (in the piano part) changes both melody and harmony drastically.[137] In this example, the shorter pattern, which is found in the piano part, begins, while the longer pattern, in the violoncello part, follows at the distance of three and one-half beats, thus adding to the intricacy of the rhythmic ostinato that of polyrhythms as well as a kind of rhythmic canon.

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[134] See *Turangalîla-Symphonie*, especially pp. 96-97.

[135] *Technique of My Musical Language*, I, 26.

[136] Drew, pt. II, *Score*, No. 13 (Sept. 1955), p. 72.

Growing out of his rhythmic practice as described above are what Messiaen calls "rhythmic characters." In his notes for Turangalîla-Symphonie, he writes:

> Let us imagine a scene in a play: three characters are on stage. The first acts; it is he who guides the scene. The second is moved, acted upon by the first. The third watches the conflict without intervening; he observes but does not stir. In the same way, three rhythmic groups are presented. The first augments; that is the character who attacks. The second diminishes; that is the character attacked. The third never changes; that is the motionless character.[138]

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[137] Technique of My Musical Language, vol. II, ex. 60.

[138] Record jacket notes by Olivier Messiaen for Turangalîla-Symphonie.

These rhythmic characters especially appear in movements III and V of Turganalila-Symphonie. In the fifth movement, the three rhythmic characters are used to create a retrograde rhythmic canon which has the effect, in Messiaen's words, of a "shattering tutti."[139]

What is the total aesthetic effect of Messiaen's rhythmic language and, indeed, of his entire musical language? As Drew notes, his added time values are "destructive...of a regular pulse."[140] Listening to Messiaen's asymmetrical rhythms is often like waiting for a second shoe to drop. The non-retrogradable rhythms also have a static quality, since something that can be run backward as well as forward is actually circular in form. Furthermore, the absence of bar-lines as well as the ever-changing number of beats in a measure destroy the regular progression of a piece. For Messiaen, true rhythm means a complex and irregular pattern opposed to march time (he even asserts that Bach, because of his regularity, "has no rhythm": "il n'y a pas de rythme"[141]) Thus one of the most significant elements to be delineated in any study of his music's effects must be his approach to time. As we have seen, his rhythms are not devised without purpose, and through the destruction of conventional rhythmic practices he aims to create a sense of timelessness.[142]

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[139] Ibid.

[140] Drew, pt. II, p. 65.

[141] Samuel, p. 66.

In contrast to the tradition of Western music since the early baroque monodists who established the practice of capitalizing on driving rhythms, Messiaen rejects any such utilization of forward-pressing motion or desire to progess in music. The late sixteenth and seventeenth centuries marked a basic change in man's orientation toward time, which became an obsession for not only musicians, but also for philosophers, scientists, and even merchants.[143] Time came to mean generally a sense of urgency--a sense of urgency that seems even demonic, as may be indicated by the change in iconography: Time in the sixteenth century becomes no longer a benign figure, but a destroyer who seems sinister.[144] Messiaen recognizes the pressure of modern urban life with its intense time-consciousness.[145] But he is not interested merely in escape from unpleasant reality; in his music, which consciously reverts to nature as found in bird songs and which usually eschews the kind of fundamental drive that builds toward a conclusion, he seriously attempts to achieve a legitimate freedom from the tyranny of time.

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[142] See Drew, pt. III, p. 51; Antoine Goléa, "Das Weltbild des Komponisten Olivier Messiaen," Neue Zeitschrift für Musik, CXXX (1969), 22.

[143] See Ricardo Quinones, The Renaissance Discovery of Time (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard, 1972), pp. 3-27.

[144] Erwin Panofsky, Studies in Iconology (1939; rpt. New York: Harper, 1962), pp. 69-94.

[145] Samuel, p. 11.

The effect of Messiaen's music thus may be contrasted with Beethoven. Drew, for example, says that the opening of the C major piano concerto (Opus 53) of Beethoven "is the accumulation of tension throughout an immense anacrusis, which culminates in the shift to the dominant's dominant in the last quarter of the second bar, is consummated with the arrival of the dominant, and then released in two stages. The nature of this event is such that at the recurrence of the idea a new, interacting experience is dramatically imperative, rather than a repetition of the old."[146] In contrast, Drew finds that the works of Messiaen, like those of Stravinsky, "give rise to tensions, but this is an extraneous and purely physical effect of something that is without tendency, something that involves no idea of 'becoming' but merely observes the behaviour in space of certain objects or cellules.... With Beethoven it is what _happens_ that matters; Stravinsky and Messiaen are merely concerned with what _is_."[147]

In a sense, therefore, Messiaen, by rejecting the modern pressure of time, is returning to an essentially medieval sense of the temporal which held that time is contained within eternity and is dependent on God at every moment.[148] There is tension in

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[146] Drew, pt. II, p. 68.

[147] _Ibid._, pp. 68-69.

[148] Cf. Victor Zuckerkandl, _Sound and Symbol_, trans. Willard Trask, Bollingen Ser., 44 (1956; rpt. Princeton: Princeton Univ. Press, 1969), pp. 155-56.

Messiaen's music, of course, but it is the tension that is encountered in the structure of things and in the condition of life. Such tension does not need to be generated or worked up in the manner of Beethoven. This fact has immense significance for Messiaen's work, for he is thus able in his composition to express at once his own indignation at the modern conception of time, and also to create a music that takes the listener into a realm of the imagination beyond the usual considerations of time as he encounters them in the workaday world. Listeners at performances of his works as a general rule have not ceased to react intensely: if they are not among those brought to boredom and anger by the music which refuses to progress, they become caught up in this music much more intensely than in traditional Western music.

Messiaen's musical language hence is a revolt against "arbitrary regularity" in rhythm[149]--a regularity which is dominated by chronological time (or at least by the metronome). Generally time is regarded as a passage from future to past, as Mari notes; but for Messiaen time "is a notion essentially relative"--a notion which takes into account not the clock or metronome but "the insect, the mountain, or the galaxy." Mari continues: "It is necessary [for Messiaen] to abolish material time in order to descend into interior timelessness.... All his works constitute a research into pure interior time and a dramatic attempt to mediate between time and eternity.... One sees that for him rhythm has a significance equal (if not more important than) duration for Bergson."[150]

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[149] Mari, p. 57.

Mari's mention of Henri Bergson deserves special attention, since this philosopher has been immensely influential in French intellectual life in general and surely may be seen as a direct and/or indirect influence on Messiaen. For Bergson too time and music stand in a special relationship. "A melody to which we listen with our eyes closed and thinking of nothing else," he writes, "is very close to coinciding with this time which is the very _fluidity of our inner life_."[151]

In each of the works in the Tristan trilogy, Messiaen's preoccupation with the problem of time is evident. In Song IX of _Harawi_, for example, he juxtaposes time, water, and heaven--a triad of associations which is indicative of the relationship between time and nature and between time and the eternal. The word _turanga_ in the title of _Turangalîla-Symphonie_ means "time which runs...like sand through the hourglass,"[152] but again here the musical treatment has the effect of abolishing the regularity and even the inevitability of the inexorable passage of time. This treatment of musical material is extended into _Cinq Rechants_, which combines a very fragmented text with a setting that alternates passages of more and less irrgularity.

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[150] _Ibid._, p. 57.

[151] Henri Bergson, _Duration and Simultaneity_, trans. Leon Jacobson (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1965), p. 44 (italics mine). See also Zuckerkandl, p. 141.

[152] Messiaen's record jacket notes for _Turangalîla Symphony_.

Messiaen seems to know that his mythic material, drawn from the Tristan and Isolde story, cannot be understood apart from time. Normally, the myth involves the death of the lovers just as the culmination of life itself comes with the end of life. However, as they live in Messiaen's music in a kind of cosmic space, the lovers manage to transcend ordinary time and even ordinary death.

CHAPTER II

HARAWI: SONG OF LOVE AND DEATH;

PART I, DESCENT AND RECOVERY

Harawi, the first composition in the Tristan trilogy, is scored for a solo woman's voice and piano. Messiaen specifies that it be a "large, dramatic soprano voice."[1] He follows the tradition of the romantic Lied and modern French song in giving to a woman's voice even verses which would logically seem more appropriate for a man to sing.[2] For example, Song V, "L'Amour de Piroutcha," in Harawi contains a section labelled "le jeune homme" which is still, of course, assigned to the soprano soloist. Messiaen, who also has played the piano accompaniment for his song cycles in performance, is particularly concerned to set up a dialogue between a male composer-pianist and a female voice. Such a dialogue, anomalous as it may seem in portions of Harawi, seems however to be particularly appropriate for a cycle which deals with the Tristan and Isolde myth.

Like the later Turangalîla-Symphonie, Harawi fluctuates between portions of light and darkness, but it never attains the degree of joyful expression and psychological release which is is present in the symphony. Song III, for example, represents very deep anguish as the lover stands dizzily over the abyss of despair and fear, while Song IV shows a recovery in which despair is overcome by the image of the rainbow and by the glance of the loved one. And the lovers are caught in the staircase of time (Song IX), yet they are able to rise above time (Song X). The imprisonment of the lovers as well as their final apotheosis in Harawi also will return in Cinq Rechants where they are encapsulated and trapped in the crystal ball (borrowed from Bosch's The Garden of Earthly Delights) and then are able to fly away finally to freedom.

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[1] Goléa, Rencontrez, pp. 123, 125. See also Mari, p. 112.

[2] Goléa indicates that Messiaen chooses the feminine voice for the states of a man's soul (Rencontrez, p. 124). The choice is logical because the soul is traditionally regarded as feminine. But see also C. G. Jung's discussion of the anima in Man and His Symbols, pp. 14, 16-17.

As explained in Chapter I, the Tristan myth as filtered through Wagner forms the mythic armature upon which Harawi, like the other remaining two compositions in the Tristan trilogy, is constructed. Both words and music are then formed much as a sculptor would shape a piece of additive sculpture around the armature. In the shaping of Harawi, there is considerable fragmentation of images from Wagner's Tristan und Isolde, from the Peruvian analogue to the Tristan story, and from a common stock of surrealist imagery. Thus in Song I there are the bank and the glances of the lovers out of Act II of Wagner's Tristan und Isolde as well as images of heart, hand, and eye--the latter two of these images ubiquitous in surrealist painting. In Song IV, we hear the sound of the ankle bells in Peruvian dance along with stars, birds, rainbow, and fruit. Yet all is given coherence by the cement of Messiaen's musical language.

Messiaen does not provide any divisions in the twelve-song cycle of Harawi, but close examination of the songs shows that they fall rather naturally into three sections. These sections become the basis for the discussion below, and also conveniently provide chapter divisions for my treatment of Harawi.

The texts of Songs I through IV of Harawi thus trace the fluctuation of mood and scene from a seemingly idyllic setting in the first song, in which the lovers are harmoniously together while the village sleeps, through premonition of separation at morning (Song II) and an experience of dizziness (Song III) until, in the fourth song, a return to an integrated psychological state is indicated by a dance song. If in our observation of mood in these four songs, we may chart them as if on a graph, we would see a pattern of descent and recovery--a pattern that represents for Messiaen the shape of the abyss on the edge of which the persona of the poetic text balances.

In Songs V through IX, the texts like the music display a great deal of tension. There is no distinct order here in these songs, except that they dramatize an unsuccessful striving for integration. Even more than in other parts of the cycle, the images and verses seem to come apart, for underneath is surely a personal and psychological turmoil. These songs culminate in Song IX, which forms the central part of the cycle. It bears comparison with the crisis of the well-made play. In this song, the many references to death accumulated in the cycle up to this point reach their climax. The question arises whether Messiaen intends us to perceive an actual physical death of the lovers here, or whether he wishes us to understand that only the fear of death (physical and spiritual) is present as something which must be lived through. Or do the references to death point to an ecstasy at once physical and mystical?[3]

In any case, Songs X, XI, and XII see the experience of love as ultimately ennobling for those who have encountered it. Yet here it also is as if the lovers have died and now grandly attain their apotheosis. The final song repeats images, phrases, and melodic material from earlier songs. In a sense, the return of material is ordered so as to emphasize the fact that in his music the apotheosis of Messiaen's lovers has occurred.

The structure of Song XII is, of course, further evidence of Messiaen's way of working to achieve coherence through cyclical form and cumulative method. Even the seemingly disjunct images and melodic phrases thus are brought together in a kind of wholeness. The entire cycle is able to give the impression of unity as well as of a wonderful diversity.

Both the mythic and the musical materials involve for Messiaen the setting up of problems which must be solved in each section of the work and also in a larger sense in the work as a whole. As the anthropologist Mary Douglas notes, "there is no musical meaning in a single isolated note."[4] The composer as he builds his work must thus develop musical meaning as he erects his musical structure out of individual notes, intervals, chords, enchainments of chords, and rhythmic patterns. In its earliest and most embryonic form, the individual song for the composer must have contained material which functioned for him like a set of problems to be solved. In the beginning there is the armature of the myth, to which Messiaen began to add text and music, and at this early stage in composition the composer's possibilities for solutions were infinite in number; however, in practice Messiaen's choices as he works out his composition are severely limited by the decisions he has already made in regard to his musical language--i.e., those tenets already laid down in *The Technique of My Musical Language* and utilized with some slight modification in the Tristan trilogy.

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[3] See Joseph Campbell, The Masks of God: Creative Mythology (New York: Viking, 1968), p. 245.

My methodology in the treatment of *Harawi* will focus on various levels of structure that become apparent when techniques of musical analysis and literary explication are applied to the music and text. Here I will pay particular attention to the way in which Messiaen sets up his musical problems and provides solutions. The analysis of the musical materials--i.e., melody, rhythm, harmony, and structure--relies as much as practicable on Messiaen's own guidelines for analysis of his works as set forth in The Technique of My Musical Language. The most significant musical elements will be scrutinized and studied in relation to the meaning which is revealed through the text. Since Messiaen's music and text combine to create a wholeness and a coherence in their analysis of the Tristan myth, it is necessary to come to terms with the work of art as a unit. The insights of phenomenology are applicable here, for phenomenology deals with the work in terms of perceived experience and observable structures. Hence phenomenology, which is primarily descriptive, provides the means for integrating the various levels on which the work may be understood. Thus the basis for the following discussion is both descriptive and analytic in nature.

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[4] Mary Douglas, "The Meaning of Myth," in *The Structural Study of Myth and Totemism*, ed. Edmund Leach (London: Tavistock, 1967), p. 50.

I. "La ville qui dormait, toi"

"La ville qui dormait, toi" serves as introduction to the entire cycle[5] and presents a glimpse of an idyllic scene that serves as a point of reference throughout. The text may be translated[6] as follows:

> The village which slept, you.
> My hand on your heart by you.
> The heart of midnight, the bank, you.
> The double of the violet, you
> The eye immobile, without unravelling your look, me.

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[5] See the record jacket notes by Robert Sherlaw Johnson for Harawi (Argo ZRG 606).

[6] There is no previous translation of the text of Harawi, which have been proclaimed untranslatable.

That which Messiaen wishes to set forth in this first poem is the bliss of togetherness with the beloved one. It is implied that he wants the mood to last forever, yet he must know that the pleasure of this moment cannot be infinitely extended.[7] But here the lovers are together, and Messiaen does not want the mood broken. The scene is, as noted above, the flowering bank on which the lovers are reclining as they look into each other's eyes in the second act of Wagner's Tristan und Isolde, and the time is that portion of the night when ordinary people are asleep in their beds. It is midnight--the time also when Pelléas and Mélisande were discovered together in Debussy's opera.[8]

Messiaen's surrealistic verse is, of course, not as easy to understand as conventional poetry, but upon careful study the contours of meaning become clear. The first line of the text of the first song simply paints the scenic backdrop, juxtaposing the sleeping village and the beloved who is beside the lover, while line 3 introduces the bank upon which they presumably are reclining. The second line, "Ma main sur ton coeur par toi" ("My hand on your heart by you") seems a fairly simple and straightforward expression of the tenderness of the scene. The fourth line, however, reveals a new symbolic level which requires interpretation but which also will always remain slightly ambiguous: "La violette double." The violet is the color violet and/or the flower, which in the Middle Ages most commonly had been a symbol of humility (hence, for example, St. Bernard could describe the Blessed Virgin as the "violet of humility"[9]). The color violet is Messiaen's favorite color, which he also understands in terms of medieval symbolism. He has said that the color violet, when it has more red in it, was understood in the Middle Ages to be symbolic of the Truth of Love; when the violet tended toward blue, it symbolized the Love of Truth.[10] Messiaen may also be aware of a further medieval significance of the violet flower which sees it as symbolic of affliction.[11] This meaning would surely be consistent with the knowledge that love can bring pain as well as joy. In the cycle, the affliction will begin in the second song when the day comes and the lovers must part.

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[7] Saville (pp. 19-36) points out this motif in the medieval alba.

[8] See Chapter I, fn. 68, above.

The music of Song I deserves careful attention and analysis, since thus will be revealed the nature of the musical problems for which Messiaen sets out to provide solutions. Here is not only an equivalence to poetic thoughts growing out of the mythic core or armature, but also a way of composition which in itself is highly expressive. The music of the song is marked by a subtle dynamic range, beginning with _ppp_, building to a kind of climax at _mf_ just past the center of the song, and returning to an even softer level, pppp, at the end. He shapes the five-line poem into a six-phrase musical structure--an ABC structure roughly equivalent to his song-sentence form, which possesses theme, middle period, and final period.[12] The final period is characterized by Messiaen's principle of development by elimination, as the words "sans denouer ton regard, moi" are set to truncated portions of earlier themes.

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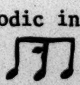
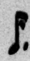
[9] George Ferguson, _Signs and Symbols in Christian Art_ (1954; rpt. New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1961), p. 40.

[10] Mari, p. 40; Samuel, p. 42.

[11] Louis Reau, _Iconographie de l'art Chrétien_ (Paris, 1956), I, 73.

Modes governing the first song are, for the vocal line, Mode 2, the blue-violet mode; for the right hand of the piano accompaniment, Mode 4; and for the left hand of the accompaniment, Mode 7. Nevertheless, the entire song seems clearly centered in a G major tonality. The melodic phrases outline chords in G major and, of the six musical phrases, four end with a chord that can be related to G major. The G major endings throw the preceding dissonant chords into the ambience of G major, and indeed the whole series of notes which make up each musical phrase can be seen as an embellishment of the tonic.[13] The vocal line for the A theme, setting the words "La ville qui dormait, toi," is a single note, D, repeated five times until finally there is a leap to the last note, B--a progression which creates the melodic interval of a major sixth. The non-retrogradable rhythm  appears early in the theme, with the short note accelerating the movement. The added value of  appears on the penultimate note, delaying the resolution to the added sixth chord on the tonic. The rhythmic pattern of the vocal line is followed by the accompaniment exactly (Harawi, p. 2, ms. 1-3).

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[12] Technique of My Musical Language, I, 37.

[13] See Heinrich Schenker, Harmony, ed. Oswald Jonas (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1954), pp. 256-76.

Messiaen's use of enchainment is evident in the first phrases of "La ville qui dormait, toi." The harmonic accompaniment begins with a dissonant chord, consisting of superpositions of major seconds and a minor third (spelled as diminished fourth) in the lower hand, and combined with the vertical sonority of a minor second in the upper hand. The harmonic structure moves from that point to a thirteenth chord with C as its root in the lower hand combined with an augmented octave (C# to D). These two chords are repeated in sequence; the fifth chord of the series is a new chord (the most dissonant chord so far) consisting of superposed perfect fourths in the left hand, juxtaposed with a chord made up of clusters of major and minor seconds and a major third in the right hand. This most dissonant chord is followed by a complex chord which sounds as if its origin is jazz; the lower hand has a diminished triad on A and the upper hand has a half diminished seventh on A^b, adding a dissonant polytonality to the jazziness. The latter chord seems to operate as a dominant to the resolving chord, the tonic with added sixth, in G.

But a mere catalog of Messiaen's complex and refined chords does not explain how they function in this particular series. We may view them in several ways--e.g., as suggested above, we may see the chords as an embellishment of the tonic. Or we may consider the dissonant chord that begins the series to be relatively less dissonant than those which immediately follow, and thus see the phrase as being built in the Hindemithian manner of chords of less tension moving to chords of most tension, and then moving back to a chord of least tension. This explains something about the sequence of chords, since the most dissonant chord is just past the center of the series of eight chords; but in forcing Messiaen into the mold of Hindemith's style, the essential quality of the French composer is missed. Messiaen's style is not so much a building of climaxes through carefully graded amounts of tension, but a movement that does not need to go anywhere. Each of the chords in the series retains one or more tones (C# and D) until the penultimate chord is reached; even there, the B and D of the previous chord are retained to forge a new linkage. One moves to a new chord which is different and yet the same; this unchanging changeableness is indeed the essence of what Messiaen has achieved. Each chord is enchained with every other chord. Then he holds back the resolution by a delicious delay of an added rhythmic value on an almost embarrassingly sweet chord--a chord which, as noted above, seems to have its origin in the vocabulary of jazz chords, and appears to function as a dominant--after which the resolution can take place on a chord which should sound even more suspiciously sweet to our ears (accustomed as they are to the assaults of Stockhausen's electronic sounds) but which, in Messiaen's hands, is made to sound exactly right; that chord of resolution, as stated above, is the added sixth on the tonic. Massiaen has captured precisely the quiet static quality of "La ville qui dormait, toi" in his musical setting.

When Messiaen sets "Ma main sur ton coeur par toi," he repeats without change the setting of the first phrase. This may raise the question as to whether Messiaen, like strophic writers everywhere, sets one line exactly, then transfers it to another line, careless of the word accents. This charge, however, does not seem applicable in this case since the musical setting seems as apt for the second line as for the first. Here it should be remembered that Messiaen makes a practice of composing words and music simultaneously. Hence the word accents are achieved as part of the process of composition and indeed can hardly be ignored in the musical setting. In other instances, of course, the poetic meter and musical rhythm may deliberately go against the grain of the natural word accents, and in these cases Messiaen has his own way of handling the problem. According to Mari, he suppresses the strong and weak musical accents in order to reduce the tension between musical and linguistic accents,[14] a practice which would be in accord with the nature of the French language.

It must also be recognized that Messiaen is the master of setting the mood required by the words. For Igor Stravinsky, especially in his post-1913 works, mood was a word with pejorative connotations; it did not interest him. There is no section in

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[14] Mari, p. 122.

Messiaen's Technique of My Musical Language which deals with mood or emotional content of his works, so we have no direct comment concerning his attitude toward mood. Yet he always takes care never to violate the thoughts and feelings of what he is setting. "La main sur ton coeur par toi" is as tender an expression as Messiaen can permit himself, and it reminds us of his words in "Le Collier," one of the songs in Poèmes pour Mi: "Ah! mon collier! Tes deux bras autour de mon cou." The mood of the words "La main sur ton coeur par toi" is thus mirrored by the static melody, the dissonant enchaining chords, and the accelerating and delaying rhythmic patterns.

The text for the middle period of Messiaen's song-sentence in Song I describes "le plein minuit, le banc, toi" and, following this, provides the equation of beloved=violet, to which reference has been made above. The musical setting moves to a middle range, whereas the first section of the song hovered around D, in a low range for the soprano voice, before moving to B (Harawi, p. 2, ms. 5; p. 3, ms. 1-2). Since in the final period of the song, the melody moves to its highest point, I see some correspondence with the practice in Indian music of beginning in a low range, proceeding to a middle register, and then going to the highest range for the last period. In the middle period of Song I, the tonality of melody and harmony moves out further from G major. At "L'oeil immobile," the two final syllables rest on the chord of the subdominant with added sixth (Harawi, p. 3, ms. 5-6). From there, the phrase "sans denouer ton regard" moves to its resolution on a G major tonic chord with added sixth (Harawi, p. 3, ms. 7-9). The last two words, "regard, moi," are separated carefully from what has gone before by a breathing mark; thus they may be regarded at least provisionally as a unit. This unit is set to the melodic interval of an ascending augmented fourth, followed by a descending major seventh (Harawi, p. 3, ms. 10-11). It is the tritone that appears over and over again in Messiaen's works, both in the compositions preceding the Tristan trilogy and in the trilogy itself. It appears (as a melodic interval of either an augmented fourth or a diminished fifth) three times in the short span of this song. In The Technique of My Musical Language, Messiaen seems to emphasize the descending tritone as the important interval in his melodic language,[15] but in the examples of melodic contours which he gives, there are as many ascending as descending tritones.[16]

Wilfrid Mellers provides some important commentary concerning both Wagner's and Messiaen's predilection for the tritone,[17] which in the Middle Ages represented the devil ("si contra fa diabolus est"). For Wagner, combinations of perfect, diminished, and augmented fourths represented a "burden of consciousness, sensuality, frustrated aspiration, and guilt."[18] Messiaen's use of the si

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[15] Technique of My Musical Language, I, 31.

[16] Ibid., vol. II, exs. 82-83.

[17] Wilfrid Mellers, Caliban Reborn (London: Gollancz, 1968), pp. 35, 104.

[18] Ibid., p. 35.

contra fa that used to be the devil is less codified and more spiritual than Wagner's use; generally speaking, Messiaen's utilization of the tritone in works based on religious and eternal themes such as *Les Corps Glorieux* and *Quartet for the End of Time* would suggest that it is more closely associated with heavenly beings--angels and their representatives, the birds--than with sin and guilt. Its use in *Harawi* is more ambiguous, since these are songs of love and death outside the frame of religious rite and belief. It can be conjectured that here the *si contra fa* is a symbol of Messiaen's own struggle against the world and the flesh, and of his final acceptance of human as well as earthly love.

This analysis of the first song in some depth has as its purpose the unveiling of the problems faced and solved by Messiaen in this portion of *Harawi*. His main concern here is, of course, to state the entire cycle in an effective way. He must set the mood for the cycle; he must create his own poetry and marry it to his musical language, which heavily uses enchaining chords that move without actually going anywhere. His structure must not force or destroy the sense of the words. And he must get "back home" without making such a final statement that the listener is satisfied to stop there, without going on to the other eleven songs. Messiaen's choice of song-sentence (with its theme, middle, and final period which moves out to a higher range and further from the tonal center, but then returns to the tonal center) seems to provide ways of solving these problems. The mood of the idyllic scene is kept by the generally soft dynamics and the enchaining chords. And this one short song, though closing satisfactorily, could never stand alone; its last measure seems to ask for a sequel.

II. "Bonjour toi, colombe verte"

It is no longer the heart of midnight; day has come. Unlike *Tristan und Isolde* where Brangäne provides the traditional warning of dawn and danger, (a warning that may be seen in terms of the traditional *alba*), there has been no warning here.[19] But the day will mean the unhappiness of separation of the lovers. The song, "Bonjour toi, colombe verte," may be translated as follows:

> Good day to you, green dove,
> Return from the heaven.
> Good day to you, limpid pearl,
> Departure of the water.
> Star-linked,
> Shadow-sharing,
> You, of flower, of fruit,
> of heaven and water,
> Song of birds.
> Good day, Water.

The text of this song introduces two important new elements: the girl as bird, the *colombe verte* or green dove of Quechua folklore, and a tune from Peruvian folk music which will be transformed by being passed through the prism of Messiaen's musical language. Both will return as linking devices for the entire cycle. The tune will be found again in Song VII, "Adieu," partially in Song IX, "L'escalier redit, gestes du soliel," and in Song XII, "Dans le noir"--the latter containing other themes from previous songs in the cycle and hence constituting a kind of "recapitulation." The appearance of the tune in Song VII is particularly important, since its association with the idea of parting is thus established.

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[19] The warning appears, however, in Song VIII, "Syllabes" in which the *alba* is transformed into the warning cry of monkeys. See below.

The fact that the beloved is understood in terms of the colombe verte, the green dove who in Peruvian mythology leaves its mate in the nest,[20] also means that Messiaen is thinking of the Tristan myth with its unfaithful heroine. But the symbolism is extremely mixed and ambiguous. Like Isolde, the bird is at once both faithless and faithful; in Peruvian lore, she deserts her mate and yet is associated with tender love.[21] For Messiaen, she becomes even the beneficent "Chant des oiseaux"--the song set apart from the bird itself. In Western mythology since early times, the dove has similarly proved to be an ambiguous symbol. For the Greeks this bird was sacred to Aphrodite,[22] though in Christian iconography it became transformed into the emblem of chastity,[23] of peace,[24] and of the Holy Spirit.[25] Messiaen's use of the symbol of the dove as associated with the beloved in Harawi makes her paradoxically both sensual and pure at the same time.

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[20] D'Harcourt, I, 190.

[21] *Ibid.*, I, 189-90.

[22] See also Chapter I, fn. 63.

[23] Reau, I, 102.

[24] Ferguson, p. 15.

Archetypally, the bird is "a symbol of transcendence" through which men have traditionally escaped from "any confining pattern of existence, as [they move] toward a superior or more mature stage in [their] development."[26] It should come as no surprise, therefore, that for some primitive cultures birds are "the 'messengers' of the celestial spirits."[27] The equation for Messiaen of loved one=bird hence suggests that through the experience of love one may, in spite of the suffering and pain, achieve transcendence, harmony, and wholeness.

But the association of the beloved with the color green also is important, for green is traditionally linked with the season of spring[28]--a time of year sacred to Venus. Because Messiaen further thinks of her in terms of the images of fruit, flowers, heaven, and water, she seems even to emerge momentarily as a kind of earth mother or goddess, provider of all good things of the earth. She is earth as well as heaven.

She is said to be a "perle limpide" and also both "retour du ciel" and "départ de l'eau." The image of the water is particularly interesting, for Messiaen had previously used this element in the title of a section of the organ cycle *Les Corps Glorieux* (1939). In the earlier work, the section "Les eaux de la Grâce" utilizes water in an entirely spiritual sense, drawing upon the traditional association of water and God's grace.[29] The section is, as Robert Sherlaw Johnson notes, "concerned with the saving power of Christ: it is the Lamb who will lead the chosen ones to the springs of the waters of life."[30] The beloved, who is also designated as "star-linked" ("Étoile enchainée"), clearly for him functions as one who brings light and life to him in almost a mystical sense. Separation from her will mean loss of peace and the return of anxiety. The two shadows which have come together in "Ombre partagée" ("shadow-sharing") cannot stay together through the day, and the "Departure of the water" will leave him apart from the woman who has become the center of his existence.

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[25] John 1:32; Ferguson, p. 15.

[26] Joseph L. Henderson, "Ancient Myths and Modern Man," in Man and His Symbols, p. 146.

[27] Mircea Eliade, Shamanism: Archaic Techniques of Ecstasy, trans. Willard R. Trask, Bollingen Ser. 76 (Princeton, N. J.: Princeton, Univ. Press, 1972), p. 89.

[28] Goléa, Rencontrez, p. 155.

The problems that Messiaen must solve in this song thus are threefold: (1) he must once again find a viable musical structure in which to enwrap the text and the myth; (2) in borrowing a theme from Peruvian folklore, he must find a way to work the folk material into the tapestry of his own musical language and hence to make the material peculiarly his own; and (3) he needs to encompass both the heavenly and earthly qualities of the beloved within the framework of his musical language.

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[29] Susan Snyder, "The Left Hand of God: Despair in Medieval and Renaissance Tradition," *Studies in the Renaissance*, XII (1965), The crucial statement is perhaps by Gregory the Great, who says that "When grace is withdrawn, it is as if the ground loses its moisture" (quoted in Snyder, p. 58).

[30] Robert Sherlaw Johnson, record jacket notes for *Les Corps Glorieux* (Argo ZRG 633).

The structure chosen by Messiaen for the song is the ABABCBC form, with the final B and C sections greatly truncated. The first section, A, uses both voice and piano. The second section, B, is a piano solo; here the pianist is directed to play "comme un oiseau"--a direction which tells us that this part carries the bird-song notations from some of Messiaen's patient researches. These two sections are then repeated, *verbatim*, with a largely new text. After the repetition of A and B is the C section, which is climactic both in terms of musical material and in text. Thereafter comes a truncated B and an equally truncated section which has a theme from C developed by elimination. With the long ascent up to the climax at C and the shorter descent following it, a perfectly rounded curve seems to be absent. Yet it sounds perfectly rounded, since the durations of the last truncated C are elongated, creating the effect of more musical material than is actually present.[31] Thus for the listener, the effect is of the arch form, described by the composer in his *Technique of My Musical Language*.[32]

Greeting the beloved and calling her the "return of heaven" makes up the text for the first A section; the vocal melody consists of six tones--E^b-F#-G-B^b-D^b--and the accompaniment consists of Mode 2 (the blue-violet mode) of the modes of limited transposition. The source of the theme is the opening phrases of the Peruvian melody "Delirio" found by Messiaen in the d'Harcourts' book (Appendix, example 8). Messiaen transforms it into a melody, not strictly modal but using the six tones in a way that suggests his modal combination of minor thirds and half steps (Appendix, example 9). The great importance of this theme is shown by the fact that it returns in other songs, as noted above. The ascending and descending tritones figure prominently on the last syllable of "colombe" and the first syllable of "verte," and again on the word "Retour."

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[31] This is an old device of Messiaen: many of his early pieces were quite short, but seemed almost interminable simply because each chord was held so long. See especially *Le Banquet celeste* (1928).

[32] *Technique of My Musical Language*, I, 7.

Although we have said that Messiaen suggests his modal practice in the melody, the harmonic implication in the accompaniment is that of E^b major. The left hand accompaniment is in block chords, largely first inversion, which carry the vocal melody in the top note of each chord, thus outlining and undergirding the melody in a kind of fauxbourdon. The chord progression itself begins with the tonic E^b in first inversion. From there it moves to an F# minor triad in first inversion, functioning as a raised minor supertonic to the E^b tonality. The harmony moves in and out of the tonic, escaping momentarily into a chord which sounds like the first inversion of an A major chord (but spelled enharmonically E-A-D^b), and functioning as a raised subdominant to the E^b

tonality. The chords, carrying melodic and harmonic materials, seem drawn to the tonic, and the whole progression appears to be either part of the tonic pedal or a temporary digression from it. Over this essentially tonic material, broken chords of thirty-second notes in triplets in the right hand outline diminished triads which are dissonant to the left hand harmony. The right hand pattern ends up by reiterating f#''' against the final tonic chord of the phrase. Nothing in the left hand harmony would have been unthinkable in the nineteenth century, but what gives it at least the flavor of the early twentieth century are the dissonances over it in the right hand. Following this phrase, the right and left hands together play an intricate melodic and rhythmic pattern of broken-chord sixteenth notes in groups of six notes to a beat; the pattern is so written as to force the two hands almost into collision with one another by the close position on the keys. The impression created is of Messiaen's "jumbles" of sound (Harawi, p. 4, ms. 3-5).

The text of the next phrase, "Retour du ciel," is concerned with the idea of descent, and it is combined with a melodic line that generally descends. This is an example of Messiaen's frequent use of word-painting, although elsewhere he often ignores such opportunities for word-painting. The left-hand chords accompanying and outlining the melody in fauxbourdon style again end on the tonic, but begin with a foreign excursion to an F# major chord with added augmented sixth. This functions like a raised major supertonic. It moves to a C major-minor seventh chord with added sixth, and functions like an altered submediant to the tonic which follows and which ends the phrase. Over what is again essentially tonal material, Messiaen places, in the right hand, triplet sixteenth notes in the form of vertical intervals of alternating sevenths and fourths in a descending sequence once again accompanying the descending idea of "Retour du ciel." Vertical intervals of sixths and fifths in a descending sequence, outlining the E^b major chord, close the section.

The amount of detail set forth in the above analysis has been necessary to display Messiaen's ability to write perfectly conventional nineteenth-century harmonies. Yet, he is not content to leave it at that, since he insists upon juxtaposing these nineteenth-century harmonies both vertically and horizontally with more dissonant harmonies.

The second section, B, is without text of vocal part--in effect, a piano solo surrounded by sections having text. We have noted above that this is to be played "like a bird," but such explicit directions should be unnecessary for anyone familiar with Messiaen's musical language. The notes are very high and very fast; we may recall the composer's explanation that birds are smaller than people, their heart beats and nervous reactions are very fast, and therefore they sing very fast.[33] Messiaen, in notating bird songs, has put them down several octaves, and has found it necessary to slow the speed so that instrumentalists can play them. He has also had to change the microtones which birds sing into intervals playable on ordinary instruments. In this passage, these principles are translated into many short, often repeated notes, as well as into many free, rhapsodic "flights" of sound. Birds also have no great respect for bar-lines, if Messiaen's transcriptions are taken as evidence, for many passages are found to be unbarred. The freedom of birds is emphasized by the lack of rhythmic and metric restrictions (Harawi, p. 5, ms. 3-4).

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[33] Samuel, p. 113.

The next A section, identical musically to the first, sets the words which compare the beloved to a "perle limpide." Messiaen had used the image of a pearl before in his poetry, in the final song of his cycle Chants de terre et de ciel. There he had used the image in connection with the angel who sits at the empty tomb of Christ, bearing perfume and pearls. The phrase "Départ de l'eau" is set to melodic, harmonic, and rhythmic material identical to that used in the setting of "Retour du ciel," neatly underlining by musical means the parallelism in the text.

The second B section is expanded considerably in length. Brilliant roulades of sound characterize this section.

I have called the central section C, although it could also logically be labelled A, since three of the four phrases of the four-phrase melodic line form a kind of tonal (inexact) retrograde of the A sections; for instead of rising from the e^{b}, the tones begin at $e^{b''}$ and descend from there. This theme, then, is also

Quechua song "Delirio," which Messiaen found in the d'Harcourt's book. The first two phrases, identical to one another, set the images of "star-linked" and "shadow-sharing." The third phrase, setting "toi, de fleur, de fruit, de ciel et d'eau," is similar in its descending line but not identical to the preceding phrases. It is an elaboration on the earlier phrases, showing that Messiaen wanted to give musical as well as textual importance to the idea of the beloved's association with flower, fruit, heaven, and water: in this song, he places more stress upon these images by their setting than even the light (star) and dark (shadow) imagery. However, it should be noted that all of the material of this section is given prominence by its position at the point in the song which the listener perceives as the center, by its repetition albeit in retrograde of section A material, and by its forceful dynamics. "Chant des oiseaux" is given a deceptively simple treatment in that it outlines the first, fifth, and third tones of the E^b major scale, but its very simplicity is effective in closing the section.

Finally another short period of bird song is added, and the last phrase of the last section, consisting of the same three tones which closed the C section, is heard. This truncated C section is given added emphasis by a pause (consisting of a quarter-note rest) after the word "Bonjour," set to the first and fifth tones, before going on to "D'eau," set to the third tone in the key of E^b major. These two final words are accompanied by the descending sevenths and fourths, sixths and fifths of the first and second A sections and hence provide the basis for neatly rounding the piece in circular form. As the voice holds out the final tone, the piano closes the section with descending chords based on the tonic.

3. "Montagnes"

"Montagnes" provides a sharp contrast to the preceding two songs in terms of myth, text, and musical setting. The first two poems had presented fairly pleasant images, and in spite of ambiguity in the imagery of the beloved, there was only a hint of the anguished lyrics and music to follow. However, one might have guessed that the idyllic pleasure of the first two songs could not last and that the reality principle at some point would dictate less happy episodes to follow.[34] The text of the song is translated as follows:

> Violet-red, black on black.
> The antiquated, useless ray of black,
> Mountain, listen to the solar confusion of dizziness.
> The genuflecting stone carries its black masters.
> In tight hoods the spruces hasten toward the black.
> The abyss, thrown everywhere into dizziness.
> Black on black.

Here the speaker seems to be plunged into a strong conflict of conscience (which says, "you must not") and desire (which says,

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[34] On the pleasure and reality principles, see Saville, *passim*.

"you must"). This conflict and the ensuing despair and anguish appear to be represented by Messiaen by the images of the abyss and blackness. Throughout the poem, he is addressing the mountain, which is a natural object that seems to stand as if above the abyss of despair.

As noted above,[35] the image of the abyss ("le gouffre" or "l'abîme") is very common in Messiaen's work, and seems to be expressed in terms of several distinct meanings, all of which revolve about the most urgent crises which a man can experience in his life. In his "Les mains des Abîmes" in Livre d'Orgue (1951), he says that he wanted to "render homage to the dizziness and symbolism of the two abysses of human misery [la misere humaine] and of divine grace [la misericorde divine]."[36] Here the abyss of human misery is mitigated through divine grace, yet both are similar in design since both are bottomless. Thus the initial problem in Harawi may be that the abyss of misery seems present without the abyss of divine grace. Perhaps the idyllic state experienced in Song I has now served to cut him off from this second abyss or perhaps even to transform it into a symbol of terror.

It should also be noted that in other instances, the idea of the abyss may represent time, which by its passing brings us closer to our mortality (or, for Messiaen, closer to eternity). In his preface to his Quartet for the End of Time, Messiaen says: "The abyss [l'abîme] is time, with its sadness, its lassitudes. The birds are the opposite of time; they are our desire for the light, for the stars, for rainbows and jubilant songs."[37] This seems to be a key to some of the interrelationships in Messiaen's elaborate system of symbols; time, despair, and the abyss are related, and the birds (heavenly messengers) are the agents by which hope is brought to the abyss. But in Song III the despair seems overwhelming.

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[35] See Chapter I, above.

[36] Samuel, p. 140.

Yet the mountains stand as if aloof from the downward pulling of the deep despair and anxiety expressed in the text of the poem. The mountains, including the one which the persona of the poem addresses, are, in keeping with the other Peruvian lore in the cycle, ostensibly the Andes--a mountain range which Messiaen had not yet seen when he wrote Harawi. But more likely Messiaen's actual thoughts here focused on the beloved mountains of the Dauphine area in France where he had spent his childhood.[38] Thus the mountain in its stability is asked to "listen to the solar confusion of dizziness." And hence the mountain is juxtaposed over against the chaos and the abyss. Blackness seems to surround the speaker ("noir sur noir"). The blackness of despair is accompanied by a feeling of uselessness ("inutile rayon noir"). That Messiaen is in part providing metaphors for his own personal feelings is proven by the following quotation:

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[37] Preface to Quatuor, p. i.

[38] Goléa, Rencontrez, p. 155; Mari, p. 7.

> In dark hours, when my uselessness is brutally revealed to me and all the musical languages of the world seem to be merely an effort of patient research, without there being anything but the notes to justify so much work--I go into the forest, into fields, into mountains, by the sea, among birds.... [I]t is there that music dwells for me, free, anonymous music, improvised for pleasure.[39]

In Song III, despair and terror are black, the color associated in Christain iconography with death and mourning.[40] The black mood in this song is hence a foreshadowing of the death imagery which becomes so dominant later in the cycle. Fortunately, as Messiaen finds relief in mountains and birds and fields, so also in Song III there is a hint or glimmer of distant hope in the color violet-red, which stands at the head of the song as a contrast to black, and which for Messiaen is symbolic of the truth of love. Yet the final words of the song are a repetition of the earlier "noir sur noir," re-emphasizing the anguish of the experience.

The musical problem which Messiaen takes upon himself in Song III is to find an aesthetically satisfactory musical equivalence for anguish and conflict. In other words, he must find a musical

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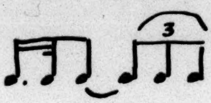
[39] Gavoty and Messiaen, p. 35.

[40] Ferguson, p. 151.

"objective correlative" for emotions which cannot be expressed directly in the musical score or in performance.[41] His structural solution consists of alternating sections having the tempo markings *très vif*; *modéré*; and *modéré*, *un peu vif*, which signal mood changes. The *très vif* sections (a), written for piano alone, are agitated and nervous, but are somehow reminiscent of the bird song passages (and, it will be recalled, the birds provide an imagery that is indicative of rescue from the abyss). These sections for piano alone have superposed minor sixths and perfect fifths with the following rhythm:



None of Messiaen's elaborate modal systems are evident here. Rather, all twelve tones are in use in both hands of the piano introduction and accompaniment to the voice. The chromatic scale, implies Messiaen, is a mode of its own,[42] and in this work it seems to represent chaos and confusion.

In contrast to the lack of modality or even economy in the accompaniment, the vocal line is severely limited. When the voice enters two measures after the beginning of section B, marked *modéré*, the singer chants the words "Rouge violet, noir sur noir" on two notes, C# and E. In the recording made by Noelle Barker, soprano, and Robert Sherlaw Johnson, piano,[43] the singer gives a rough quality to her voice on these words in order to signal that this is not a joyful or pleasant song (*Harawi*, p. 12, ms. 8). "L'antique inutile rayon noir" is set to a phrase which goes scarcely further than the first. There are now, however, four tones in the phrase, C#, E, F♮, and G♮ (*Harawi*, p. 13, ms. 2-3). The last phrase in the *modéré* section, setting the words "Montagne, écoute le chaos solaire du vertige," is able to escape the entrapping boundaries of the previous melody, and at "vertige" ("dizziness") the voice leaps up to the octave above the first C#. While the voice holds out the last note, the C section, marked *modéré, un peu vif*, is begun by the piano, making another section for the piano alone. This section is the one to which reference has been made in Chapter I as being characterized by the technique of superposition of rhythm on its own retrograde. The right hand rhythmic pattern, beginning at measure 14, runs forward at the same time that the identical pattern in the left hand begins at measure 23 and runs in retrograde fashion from measure 23 to measure 14. The two voices, right and left hands, meet and cross at measure 18. The right hand pattern begins again at measure 23 and runs forward, with the left hand pattern beginning at measure 30 and working backward in retrograde fashion.

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[41] The term "objective correlative" was coined and popularized by T. S. Eliot.

[42] Messiaen asserts, for example, that some music of Mozart and Monteverdi is chromatic, and that all of Wagner is chromatic. See Samuel, p. 50.

[43] Argo ARG 606.

Another A section follows, and a second B section is added. The text which is set here is the portion describing rocks genuflecting[44] and spruces hooded like monks. The abyss, thrown into dizziness, carries the same musical setting as did the text concerning "the solar confusion of dizziness." Another C section of rhythmic canon is played by the piano alone, another A section for the piano alone is added in nervous agitation, and finally the first motif of the vocal line, C#-E-C#, is heard with the words "Noir sur noir." The whole song is very harsh, very percussive, and very static in terms of vocal melodic line. The melodic line only at two points escapes from the desperate bondage of despair. While "Montagnes" can never be sung alone without being buttressed on each side by its adjacent songs, it nevertheless does stand out alone as a unique musical equivalent for the state of anguish.[45]

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[44] Comparison may be made with Messiaen's use of heavy chords to symbolize rocks in *Chronochromie*; this is not, however, a device which he uses in this song.

IV. "Doundou tchil"

The fourth song, "Doundou tchil," is a dance song which functions as a point of recovery after the anguished descent into the abyss in Song III. Furthermore, it serves as a natural close to the first unit of four songs in the cycle comprised of twelve songs in all. Messiaen opens the song with the Quechua words "doundou tchil," an onomatopoetic expression for the sound made by the ankle bells of dancers; the expression comes from the dance song "Quisiera, quisiera ser danzantito," which is found in the d'Harcourt collection[46] (Appendix, example 10). The text of the Quechua song is as follows:

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[45] For a curiously sanguine interpretation of the abyss and of the blackness in this poem, see Goléa, Rencontrez, pp. 159-60. Goléa claims that the abyss is the abyss of love, while the darkness is reminiscent of the darkness which closes Tristan und Isolde in Wieland Wagner's staging: after the death of the lovers, the scene gradually darkens until the one tiny flame still flickering is extinguished.

> I would like to be a noble dancer
> With ankle bells on my feet,
> Doundou tchil, tchil-tchil-tchil!
> In order to dance with my betrothed
> From now until the dawn.
> Doundou tchil, tchil-tchil-tchil!

Concerning the song and its accompanying dance, the d'Harcourts comment: "The dance song is performed during the Festival of the God; it accompanies entirely the choreographic 'sports' of the dancers dressed in a carnival fashion, and who have cloth or leather leggings (shin guards) which are decorated with dangling bells that ring with each movement."[47]

It should be noted here that the dance of Messiaen becomes associated with the dance of joy and the spiritual union of the lovers. Reference may be made to the fifth movement of Turangalîla-Symphonie which dramatizes, as Messiaen himself has noted, "the union of the two lovers" as "a transformation on a cosmic scale."[48] Here too in Song IV of Harawi the dance is a "transformation" which is an integrative experience linking the lovers to the very order of the cosmos. Thus we have associations with the cosmic dance, the planets whirling, and stars jumping like grasshoppers, as in the eleventh song of the cycle. In Song IV, the beloved is identified as the "dance of the stars."

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[46] D'Harcourt, I 458-59.

[47] Ibid., I, 459.

[48] Record jacket notes for Turangalîla-Symphonie.

The text of the fourth song is translated as follows:

> Doundou tchil.
> Piroutcha, there you are, O my love,
> Dance of the stars, doundou tchil.
> Piroutcha, there you are, O my love,
> Mirror of familiar birds, doundou tchil.
> Rainbow, my breath, my echo,
> Your glance has returned, tchil.
> Piroutcha, you are there, O my love,
> My bouyant fruit in the light, doundou tchil.
> Toungou, mapa, mama, mapa, kahipipas.

The recovery is brought about by the return of the beloved, now called for the first time by her Peruvian name, Piroutcha.[49] She is the mirror image of familiar birds, which, as we have seen above, are symbolic of rescue from the abyss. She is bird and she is rainbow--another image which mediates between earth and heaven. Significantly, the French word for "rainbow" is "arc-enciel"--a word which hints of the rainbow's archetypal meaning. In Scandinavian mythology, the rainbow is a bridge built by the gods between heaven and earth. "It has three colours," says Snorre Sturlason, "is built with cunning craft and is exceedingly strong, and yet will be broken at the end of the world."[50] In Christian iconography, the rainbow is of course a symbol of hope and a sign of pardon--i.e., of divine intervention promised in order to bridge the abyss which separates fallen man from God.[51] Messiaen's fondness for rainbows and the analogies he draws between sounds and the rainbow's colors are well known. He says in his Technique of My Musical Language: "My secret desire of enchanted gorgeousness in harmony has pushed me toward those swords of fire, those sudden stars, those flows of blue-orange lavas, those planets of turquoise, those violet shades, those garnets of long-haired arborescence, those wheelings of sounds and colors in a jumble of rainbows of which I have spoken with love in the Preface of my Quatuor pour la fin du Temps."[52]

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[49] Messiaen's source for the name is the song "Piruça," which is No. 31 in the d'Harcourts' collection (I, 276-77). He also used the tune of this folk song in Song V of Harawi.

For Messiaen rainbows have not only archetypal but also musical implications. In the passage from his Technique of My Musical Language, quoted in the previous paragraph, Messiaen is referring to harmonic rainbows, but he also considers his modes of limited transposition and his non-retrogradable rhythms to be pathways to a kind of theological rainbow: "Let us think now of the hearer of our modal and rhythmic music.... [I]n spite of himself he will submit to the strange charm of impossibilities: a certain effect of tonal ubiquity in the nontransposition, a certain unity of movement (where beginning and end are confused because identical) in the nonretrogradation, all things which will lead him progressively to that sort of *theological rainbow* which the musical language, of which we seek edification and theory, attempts to be."[53]

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[50] Reidar Th. Christiansen, "Myth, Metaphor, and Simile," in Myth: A Symposium, ed. Thomas A. Sebeok (1955; rpt. Bloomington: Indiana Univ. Press, 1972), p. 69.

[51] Ferguson, p. 43.

[52] Technique of My Musical Language, I, 52; see also Messiaen's Preface to the Quartet for the End of Time.

The identification of Piroutcha in line 6 of Song IV with "my breath" ("mon souffle") also defines the beloved as the man's source of life and wholeness, while at the same time it provides a link with Wagner's *Tristan und Isolde*. Messiaen's French verses cannot give us, however, the wonderful polarity of "atmen" ("breathe") and "Atem" ("spirit") of the German of the last act of Wagner's music drama in which, dying, Isolde sings:

> Wie sie [Düfte] schwellen,
> mich umrauschen,
> soll ich atmen,
> soll ich lauschen?...
> In dem wogenden Schwall,
> in dem tönenden Schall,
> in des Welt-Atems
> wehendem All--
> ertrinken,
> versinken--

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[53] *Technique of My Musical Language*, I, 21, (italics mine).

> unbewusst--
> höchste Lust![54]

The persona's experience in Song IV cannot contain such a sustained paean of desire as is found in the final act of Tristan und Isolde, but at the heart of each is the notion attributed to the lovers that life for the one cannot be lived without the other.

Hence the beloved in Song IV is referred to in terms of beneficent images. She is the lift or bouyant fruit, reminiscent of the imagery and archetypal meaning (especially in connection with the earth mother) established in the second song. And she is the light ("lumière"), which also seems related back to the "star-linked" of Song II.

The final phrase, "Toungou, mapa, nama, mapa, kahipipas," is a combination of Quechua and Sanskrit words. The word "Toungou," found in the song "Tungu, tungu,"[55] is another onomatopoetic word, this time meaning the soft roulades of the dove: "The words [of 'Tungu, tungu'] in Quechua begin with an onomatopoetic imitation of the dove, which, during five couplets, present the poet asking the bird about the cause of its eternal sadness, indifferent to the changing spectacle of nature."[56] "Mapa" is apparently one of Messiaen's synthetic words, made up of two Sanskrit syllables, both standing for intervals in the Hindu musical scale. "Nama" in Sanskrit means "name." But Messiaen uses the two words more for their sound than for their sense. "Kahipipas" in Quechua means "here," and is used in the expression "here or there" ("kahipipas, mahipipas"). These Quechua words are taken by Messiaen from the song "Tikata Tarpuinikiču."[57] Later, we will see part of the tune for this folksong used as thematic material for Song VIII, "Syllabes," and both words and musical intervals of the phrase "kahipipas, mahipipas" are used in this song. However, there seem to be no musical echoes of "Tikata Tarpuinikiču" in Song IV.

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[54] Tristan and Isolde, ed. Robb, pp. 148, 150.

[55] D'Harcourt, I, 292-93.

[56] Ibid., I, 294.

In "Doundou tchil," Messiaen has set out to work out musical solutions to the problem of creating a structure that will express the recovery after the anguish of the previous song. He hence draws upon such details as the festive sounds of the ankle bells of Peruvian dancers and works these into the fabric of his music. He must here link the idea of dance (dance of love, cosmic dance) to the characterization of the beloved, and to place her as rescuer (bird), star-linked (light), rainbow (bridge), echo, and fruit (earth mother). Furthermore, as part of his musical solution he chooses to weave into the whole the sounds of various Quechua and Sanskrit words. Since the musical means he chooses involve a series of ostinati, he must also find his way out of the relentless patterns.[58]

The structure for this song is additive and is made up of four contrasting sections, each with its own tempo markings and used in the following order: ABCDC'B'A'B'' and a final fragment of A. To simplify the structure further is to ignore new thematic material as well as tempo changes and the changes from voice with piano accompaniment to piano alone.

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[57] *Ibid*., I, 458-59.

[58] See Drew, pt. II, p. 71.

The A section is made up of twenty appearances of the word "Doundou tchil," which Messiaen sets so as to represent the sounds of bells worn by the Peruvian dancers, as noted above. The words are set to a regularly recurring rhythmic pattern sung on one tone, C#, and each time the word is followed by two quarter-note rests (Harawi, p. 19, ms. 2). This is accompanied by bell-like sixteenth and thirty-second notes only in the left hand, graced by acciacaturas. The sound is like Indian ankle bells with kanjira accompaniment, and it is a safe guess that Messiaen's love for Indian music is infused into his interpretation of ancient Peruvian dance music (Harawi, p. 19, ms. 1-2). But once this means of expression has been chosen, Messiaen must find a way out from the ostinato of voice and piano. His solution, following the seventeenth repetition of the word "doundou tchil" with its regular rest, is to omit the next three rests and to pile up the final three repetitions of "doundou tchil" in a kind of stretto laid out flat. These gain momentum by following one another so closely, and they also gain in dynamic strength since they are marked with a crescendo.

In contrast to the ankle bells is the B section for piano alone, consisting of triplet sixteenth notes in the right hand against duple sixteenth notes in the left hand. This is, again, an ostinato rhythmic as well as tonal pattern, and is not one of Messiaen's rhythmic ostinatos divorced from melodic and harmonic material.[59] It has a sequence of two different patterns in the right hand against three different patterns in the left hand; thus, it is not until the seventh repetition of the right hand pattern that the same combination of tones and rhythms meet again (*Harawi*, p. 21, ms. 5-6). Perhaps in the myriad of sounds the ear might pick up the top notes in the descending pattern played by the right hand, which act as a constant melody, but these are so high that it is more likely that the ear only would perceive all the sounds as "jumbles" of shimmering chords. Messiaen directs the pianist to play these "*comme du verre*" ("like glass"), and we recall his love for stained glass windows and his similar love for chords which he compares to them.[60]

In section C, Messiaen chooses to set "Piroutcha te voila, ô mon àmoi" to a pattern with two non-retrogradable rhythms for the vocal line, and a steady sixteenth-note rhythm for an accompaniment (*Harawi*, p. 22, ms. 1-2). The chords of the accompaniment are the enchaining type, with common tones being retained from each preceeding chord. These sixteenth-note chords become a rhythmic and harmonic ostinato also, and Messiaen spins them out for the rest of the text, which speaks of the beloved as a dance of the stars, as bird, as rainbow, as breath, as echo, and as fruit. Then he must choose chords which can both close off the ostinato pattern and at the same time lead to the next section, D, a setting of the bi-lingual phrase, "Tongou, mapa, nama, mapa, kahipipas." This section, marked *Même mouvement*, *berceur*, anticipates in movement the text of the opening song of the next unit, "L'amour de Piroutcha," which says, "Rock your little one in your green arms," It is a rocking movement, caused by Messiaen's syncopations and added values, which he says have the effect of making "the rhythms limp deliciously" with a "perverse" charm,[61] almost in the way that Gerard Manley Hopkins' sprung rhythms give a delightful little wrench to his meters.

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[59] *Technique of My Musical Language*, I, 26.

[60] *Ibid.*, I, 8, 27, 50.

The melodic line for section D consists of five tones, B^b-C^b-D^b-E^b-F^b, neither a mode nor a pentatonic scale, just five tones used over and over, stepwise, descending and ascending. The tritone is the interval which closes each phrase of the two-phrase section (*Harawi*, p. 23, ms. 6-11).

From here, everything is more or less a repetition of the first four sections. The second C is longer than the first by means of the addition of a transposition of the theme to a higher pitch and by means of an elaboration of the notes on the words "mon fruit léger dans la lumière." There is another B section, followed by the twenty repetitions of "doundou tchil" of section A. When section A first appeared, it has an accompaniment in the left hand alone; now, a right hand accompaniment is added. To the previous rhythm of sixteenth and thirty-second note values of the left hand, thirty-second and sixth-fourth note values are added in the right hand, making the simplicity of the repetitions of "doundou tchil" stand out in stark contrast. The accompaniment for both hands is reminiscent in many ways of bird song style. The A section is followed by yet another B, and finally one decisive "doundou tchil," marked both *ff* and *un peu vif*, closes the piece (*Harawi*, p. 29, ms. 7).

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[61] *Ibid.*, I, 48.

Few composers, with the exception of Ravel in his *Bolero*, would perhaps risk, as Messiaen does, the dangers of monotony by the many repetitions of "doundou tchil" on one note. But Messiaen rightly never worries about the listener's own problem of possible boredom. He simply presents the song, with its contrasting sections, repetitions with and without changes, its build-up of tempo and volume, and then leaves it for the listener to become hypnotically caught up in the regular beat of the dance.

With the close of the fourth song, the first unit of songs in *Harawi* is concluded. The texts have described a curve like an inverse rainbow which traces the *persona's* descent from happiness into anxiety and despair, and then to his recovery in Song IV. The music has provided musical equivalents for the emotions expressed in the texts, and it has done this without slavish word painting. Finally, since the unit is not complete in itself, Song IV even anticipates the fifth song, which opens the second unit of songs.

CHAPTER III

HARAWI: SONG OF LOVE AND DEATH

PART II: CRISIS

V. "L'amour de Piroutcha"

"L'amour de Piroutcha," the lullaby of the lovers which is the fifth song in the cycle, is the opening song of the second group or unit of songs that will culminate in Song IX. This unit of songs is characterized by anxiety as expressed in various ways in both words and music. The mood of the fifth song seems calm, but there is evidence of considerable anxiety, especially in the lines given to the young man, who says, "Coupe-moi la tête," and mentions "Chaînes rouges, noires, mauves"--imagery which suggests "la mort" rather than "l'amour." The following is a translation of the text of this song:

Young Girl: Toungou, ahi, toungou, rock, you, my
cinder of light,
Rock your little one in your green arms.
Piroutcha, your little cinder, for you.
Young Man: Your eye all the heavens, doundou tchil.
Cut off my head, doundou tchil.
Our sighs, blue and gold, Ahi!
Chains of red, black, mauve, love, death.

Of the two speakers in the poem, the young girl is placed first. It is her words which establish the poem as a lullaby.

But the words of her speech are in many ways ambiguous and even confusing. In Song IX, the *persona* will speak of the beloved as "my little cinder," but here the girl's first reference to the cinder is not at first clear. Who is the "cinder of light" in the second line? Does she speak of herself, or of the young man? Are they both cinders, burned-out cases after the traumatic experience of Song III? Are they "mortal remains," in accordance with the prevailing themes of love and death? But then in her final line she seems to identify herself as the "little cinder," thus in the end arriving at a more definite association between the young woman and the image of the cinder. The effect in her portion of the song, in which one character blurs in and out of the other, is like the confusion of identities so often seen in surrealist paintings and even more especially in surrealist films where the images of two persons may be superimposed upon one another and may fade to one and then to the other alternately in a deliberately confusing manner. The flattened corpse turning to a cardboard figure in Dali and Bunuel's *Un Chien Andalou* may be recalled.[1] But there is also another way of interpreting the cinder image. As an equivalent of emotion, the "cinder of light" also describes the glowing passion of the lovers.

The young man's words create fewer obvious problems. His statements in general generate visual images which are surrealistic and splendidly colorful but which could hardly be reduced entirely to rational explanation. For example, "Your eye all the heavens" ("Ton oeil tous les ciels"), reminds us of the surrealistic paintings in which an eye (or eyes) dominates the entire painting.[2] If we compare the young man's words with those of the young woman, we see that they are even more full of anxiety, as the words "cut off my head" ("Coupe-moi la tête") would surely suggest. Goléa believes that this curious statement represents the desire of the man to be rid of the instrument of thought and feelings, the head with its brain: "Cut off my head...cut off the seat of all sensibility, of all mobility, of all sensuality, of all pleasure."[3] Concerning "sighs, blue and gold," Goléa says:

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[1] See the description of this scene in Luis Buñuel, *L'Age d'Or and Un Chien Andalou*, trans. Marianne Alexandre (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1968), 106-07, but the film must be consulted to observe this detail.

> The sighs of the two lovers which approach each other, which touch each other, which mingle their sighs, their sighs blue and gold, blue, the color of blood under the skin which swells at the call of love, gold, the color of the aroused flesh which warms, which flames, which burns, which ripens in the sun of love.[4]

Goléa also thinks that the "Chaînes rouges, noires, mauves" ("Chains of red, black, mauve") are the mountains, not the Andes, but again of the Dauphine area, and that these "in solitude" are with love--love and death."[5] Thus, in the midst of the beauty of the mountains, one is faced by the fact that the culmination of life and love is death. These readings, however, seem at times forced and arbitrary.

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[2] See Max Ernst's *The Escaper*; reproduction in Gaston Diehl, *Max Ernst* (New York: Crown, 1973), p. 23. See also Rubin, p. 49; Sarane Alexandrine, *Surrealist Art* (New York: Praeger, 1970), p. 91.

[3] Goléa, *Rencontrez*, p. 161.

[4] *Ibid*., p. 161.

In this song, Messiaen must solve the musical problem of representing the love songs of the young man and woman--i.e., their lullaby. The musical score must reflect the surface calmness of this mood and also the anxiety which is beneath the surface. He chooses to take the musical theme from the Peruvian folk song "Piruča,"[6] which he must again transform through the "deforming prism"[7] of his language. The d'Harcourts consider the melody of "Piruča" to be purely Indian, especially since it is marked by pentatonicism. The scale on which it is built consists of four regularly used tones, D-F-A-C, and one used slightly less frequently, G. Messiaen takes over the five tones as well as the phrase structure for Song V of *Harawi* and uses them as basis for the vocal line of the section expressing the thoughts and feelings of the young girl. The phrases from the original song are shown in the examples, along with Messiaen's transformations of each (Appendix, example 11). For the fifth phrase of the folksong, Messiaen changes the melody which outlines the "tonic" (if one may speak of such in pentatonicism) on F and puts it into the first inversion. From that point, the entire line is altered in character, and the composer ends with his favorite interval of a tritone (Appendix, example 12). The pentatonicism of the Peruvian folksong is compatible with Messiaen's modes, since in the first A section, he adds a few notes and achieves a partial Mode 2; in the elaboration of the melody which is found in the repetition, enough notes are added to create a melody entirely in Mode 2. Mode 2 is also used for the accompaniment for this section, and the combination of Mode 2 vocal line and Mode 2 accompaniment constitutes a rare consistency of tonal material which Messiaen provides in this song. The rocking motion in the rhythmic and melodic pattern of this section is used to express the lullaby quality of the song.

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[5] *Ibid.*, p. 161.

[6] D'Harcourt, I, 276-77.

[7] *Technique of My Musical Language*, I, 32.

For the B section, dealing with the young man's thoughts and feelings, the tonal means chosen is that of chromaticism for both vocal line and accompaniment. The melodic line setting the text "Ton oeil tous les ciels" and "Coupe-moi la tête" is an arching line, not especially tonal except for its close, setting the words "doundou tchil," cadencing in G major. The return of the words "doundou tchil" reminds us of the dance song immediately preceding Song V; the rhythm here is the same short-short-long rhythm that was found in the previous song (Harawi, p. 30, ms. 8-9).

The vocal melodic line rises and falls, with the descending tritone much in evidence. For "Nos souffles" Messiaen uses a non-retrogradable rhythm, dictated by the interplay of word accents.

The words "Chaînes rouges, noires, mauves, amour" are set to descending intervals of different sizes, including one tritone. At "la mort," the melody, which has leaped down a seventh from D to E, now descends by means of an acciacatura from E to the D immediately below it. One goes down into death (Harawi, p. 31, ms. 5-6).

Both sections, young girl's and young man's, are repeated, this time with elaborations on the melodic line. The melodic line representing the young man's thoughts and feelings now soars higher than it had in its first appearance, creating a more pronounced climactic point, and it also sinks lower, creating more contrast. On its second appearance, "la mort" sinks only as far as G (not all the way to D as it has previously), and the song ends on an added sixth chord in G major, giving the ending a very solid G major tonal feeling and setting up an impression of rest after all the Mode 2 and chromatic wanderings. The structure is ABAB, binary form, upon which Messiaen comments in his Technique of My Musical Language: the first A is the theme, while the first B is the "commentary on the theme, modulating more or less, inflected toward the dominant of the initial key."[8] Messiaen's statement concerning the use of the B section in binary form as "commentary" is thus exemplified in this piece, which begins and ends with a feeling of the G tonality, with the B section ending on a D. The next A is the theme again, with the last B, the "second commentary, concluding upon the tonic of the original key."[9] Messiaen chooses rather simple structural means to express complicated ideas of tranquility and anxiety, and the combination of simple and complex seems effective.

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[8] Ibid., I, 38.

VI. "Répétition Planétaire"

The text of the sixth song is translated as follows:

Ahi! O Mapa nama mapa nama lila, tchil.
Straddle a black cry.
Black echo of time,
Cry before the earth at any moment,
Black echo of time,
Winding staircase.
Whirlpool,
Red star,
Whirlpool,
Planet consumes in turning.

The Indian words "Mapa, nama, mapa, nama" return, and this time they are used in conjunction with the Indian word for play or drama, "lila,"[10] as well as the onomatopoetic sound of ankle bells, "tchil." In spite of the references to play and dance, the song seems to be linked with "Montagnes" in its insistence upon the image of blackness. However, the mood here is more of inward and outward churning, emotional upheaval and outer pressures, rather than the pure despair of the previous song. In "Répétition Planétaire" the mood is thus modified by other images, the "Winding staircase" ("Escalier tournant") and the "Whirlpool" or "Whirlwind" ("Tourbillon"). The staircase, which will return in the ninth song of the cycle, can be the staircase of time, of heaven, and of water, but here it seems primarily to represent the inward spiralling which the soul undergoes in order to achieve balance when all seems to reel around it. The turbulence (the "vertige" or Song III) which the person is experiencing is cosmic. Goléa thus discovers in this poem the "prodigious shock of the cosmos, which is translated into music with an immense rhythmic power, a sonorous and unsurpassed frenzy, [and which] is continued in a commentary that succeeds in reuniting in a sheaf the cries, colors, the prodigious movement of the rhythm of love and death in both the universe and in man."[11]

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[9] *Ibid.*, I, 38.

[10] See record jacket and notes for *Turangalîla-Symphonie*.

Goléa, however, overlooks the "Echo noir du temps" ("the black echo of time") which clearly seems to be associated both with abyss imagery and with Messiaen's preoccupation with time. Anxiety, which is the element being dramatized here, cannot exist in eternity, but it is a condition of living in time. To experience anxiety in time thus is to enter into the abyss of time; fortunately, this may take place in a manner which may ultimately insure a reintegration of the personality more aware than ever before of its consciousness.

While Messiaen's musical problems are not unrelated to the question of time in Song VI, the focus in the musical setting is upon concrete matters such as structure, melody, harmony, rhythm. He is here, as in the previous songs in the cycle, working also as a practical composer who needs to connect the words and phrases of the strangely disconnected text to his musical expression. Thus he must find a musical texture to express his image of emotional upheaval in which even the planets reel and turn about the persona. (This image, of course, is symbolic of the emotional upheaval of the lovers.) The metaphors of the text must find themselves expressed in their musical metaphors--i.e., in a structure, melody, harmony and rhythm which are expressive of this cosmic love. At the beginning of the song, there are primitive cries and forest calls, followed by the now familiar list of Sanskrit words which, as noted above, function like an invented language.

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[11] Goléa, Rencontrez, p. 162.

Messiaen's structural solution for this song is a ternary form with three separate sections--A, B, and C--used in the following way: ABA'B'CA''. The A section is made up of the cries based on "Ahi!" which perhaps represents the cry echoing across eternity,[12] and of a wild cadenze to be sung "like a call in the forest"[13] (Appendix, example 13). The piano accompaniment for the cries is an ostinato pattern in each hand, six notes to each beat, without tonal center and creating dissonances as the two hands meet and cross. Then the accompaniment changes to a steady sixteenth-note pattern, consisting of an ascending sequence of dissonant intervals. All of the accompaniment for section A is chromatic, and there is, as noted above, no harmonic tonal center. Section B carries the marking "Modéré, mysterieux," and the text consists of the list of Sanskrit words, repeated over and over on one note, E natural, in slow sixteenth note values, like an incantation.[14] The voice repeats the list five times, and on the last two times, the word "pampahika" is intruded. This word appears later in the song as "pampahikama," which appears to be one of the synthetic words invented by Messiaen; the word perhaps derives from "Pampa," a river in the south of India, "hi," indeed, and "kama," sensual love. For this hypnotic incantation, the accompaniment in the right hand is in Mode 3, which is associated with the colors orange and milky-white speckled with red. The accompaniment itself consists of patterns which are both rhythmic and melodic ostinati. The patterns begin in a low register, ascending and then descending by means of various sized of vertical intervals (Harawi, p. 34, ms. 10-11). The whole accompaniment, with the long-held low E^b in the left hand made more prominent by the grace notes before it, sounds like a sequence moving in and out of the key of A^b; the chord preceding the return to the tonal center functions like a Neapolitan sixth chord to the second inversion tonic chord on E^b. The incantation on E, strangely, does not clash harshly with the accompaniment.

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[12] Robert Sherlaw Johnson, record jacket notes for Harawi.

[13] The complete directions to the singer are as follows: "à pleine voix, un peu faux, comme un appel en forêt" (Harawi, p. 34).

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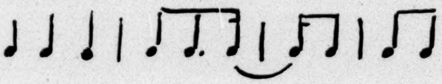
[14] Noelle Barker whispers the words in a way that fulfills Messiaen's directions "mysterieux," on the recording of Harawi (Argo).

Sections A and B are repeated, with some new material added and one measure omitted. A trill and some triplet thirty-second notes are the new additions to the left hand accompaniment, but these slight changes are more noticeable to the eye than to the ear.

The C section begins with a piano interlude that anticipates thematic material in the vocal part ("Enfourche un cri noir") which shortly will follow it (Harawi, p. 40, ms. 9-17). Then there is a short passage which uses the words "tchil" and "pampahika" in a percussive way. The words are repeated on one tone using the following rhythm, dominated by syncopations (Harawi, p. 41, ms. 1-4):



It is an echo of the rhythm in the D section of "Doundou Tchil," setting the words "Toungou, mapa, nama, kahipipas."

Next, Messiaen introduces that portion of the text which carries the metaphor of lovers as reeling planets. In its disjunctiveness, the text shows its relationship to surrealism, which has been said to be marked by the "reconciliation of opposites."[15] However, unlike the reconciliation of opposites in the aesthetic of Coleridge, the opposites in surrealism are no longer in the realm of possibility (true pairs, such as *form* and *content*), but are strained and strange, not true pairs at all. The material is often thrown together violently without regard for its aptness to be joined, and both syntax and sense seem disarranged in the process. The new linkage that is formed by this violent union is, however, often a strong one.

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[15] Sandrow, p. 21.

To express this text with its surrealistic lovers as reeling planets, Messiaen must forge the third link of his ternary structure, and the principle he exploits to great effect is that of development by elimination. But before he can begin the process of eliminating elements from his theme, he must create the thematic materials themselves. First he chooses a tone row--A-D-C#-E^b--which has been anticipated in the C piano interlude, and he uses this for the setting of the words "Enfourche un cri noir." He puts the tones together in a way that outlines the tonality of D major with one note foreign to the tonality (Appendix, example 14). He repeats the same pattern one step higher for the next line of poetry, "Echo noir du temps," in a kind of E major tonality with one foreign note. "Cri d'avant la terre à tout moment" uses some of the same tones, plus B^b: A-B^b-C#-D-E^b. These are shown in Appendix, example 15. "Echo noir du temps" is an exact repetition of its last appearance, while "Escalier tournant" has the first five notes of the pattern which set "Cri d'avant la terre"; the setting is more representational of "winding" than of the cry across eternity. "Tourbillon" has its own three-note row (Appendix, example 16). "Étoile rouge" is given a tone row which returns and is expanded for "Planète mange en tournant"[16] (Appendix, example 17). The percussive section returns, after which all the previous text--"Enfourche un cri noir" to "Planète mange en tournant"--is repeated. A piano interlude follows. Now the development by elimination begins; the verses "Tourbillon,/ Étoile rouge,/ Tourbillon,/ Planète mange,/ Planète mange en tournant." Finally, all but "Mange en tournant" is eliminated, and this phrase with its customary musical setting is heard five times. The repetitions of "Mange en tournant" are given in such rapid succession that they build tension and express frenzy. The multiple repetitions become so intertwined that at last neither beginning nor end of the sequence is discernible to the ear. Beginning and end are brought together as in the emblem of the snake biting its tail in the Renaissance representation of cyclic or seasonal time.[17] There is no way out of the circular pattern except a complete halt--i.e., the snake lets go of its tail. Thus, in creating a circular musical metaphor for the turning of the planets and their voracious consuming of everything as they turn, Messiaen has attained a truly inspired setting. Four cries, a forest call, and a last arpeggio in the lower register of the keyboard complete the song.

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[16] For a graphic representation of a similar subject--cosmic bodies eating and being eaten--see Kurt Seligmann's painting *Star Eater* (1947); reproduction in Rubin, fig. 248.

[17] The snake biting its tail and thus forming a circle as an image of Time is seen in Brueghel's engraving *The Triumph of Time*.

VII. "Adieu"

In "Adieu," a farewell is celebrated. The translation of the song is as follows:

Farewell to you, green dove;
Sorrowful angel.
Farewell to you, limpid pearl,
Guardian sun.
You, of night, of fruit, of heaven, of day,
Wing of love.
Farewell to you, new light,
Philtre with two voices.
Star-linked,
Shadow-sharing,
In my hand my fruit of heaven, of day,
Faraway love.
Farewell to you, my heaven on earth,
Farewell to you, desert which weeps,
Mirror without sigh of love.
Of flower, of night, of fruit, of heaven, of day,
Forever.

The farewell is, however, not a final parting, as the remainder of the cycle proves. Nevertheless, here is an experience of parting which the lovers must go through. The anxiety of the moment will thus look forward even beyond the second unit of songs (Songs V-IX) to the final group, when in the tenth song the link to heaven becomes actualized and in the eleventh song the stars jump joyfully like grasshoppers.

Familiar images return in this song, as we hear again the phrases "perle limpide," "de fruit, de ciel, de jour," "Étoile enchainée," and "Ombre partagée" from Song II. The "miroir" of Song IV returns this time as "miroir sans souffle d'amour" ("mirror without sigh of love"). New images are the "sad angel" ("Ange attristé"), "guardian sun" ("Soleil gardien"), "Philtre with two voices" ("Philtre à deux voix"), and "desert which weeps" ("desert qui pleure"). These images associated with the beloved have a sadness not previously encountered.[18]

Particularly important here is the image of the philtre, which of course constitutes a clear reference to the love potion imbibed by Tristan and Isolde--a potion which Isolde thinks is a death drink and which Tristan thinks is a drink of friendship. The use of the potion in Wagner's version of the story has been severely criticized by Hanslick and others since they believe that it makes the drama essentially undramatic by taking away the free will of the hero and heroine.[19] For Messiaen, however, the philtre is symbolic of an event in the lives of the lovers which is beyond logical and rationalistic explanations as are to be found in Hanslick's criticisms. The philtre for Messiaen is not causal, and yet it is a symbol of the spontaneous erupting of a love which causes long periods of anxiety as well as moments of bliss. As Gottfried Weber suggests, the philtre is "a metaphor for that psychological moment in love when two people of strongly sensual disposition lose control of the human faculty of free choice, under the influence of an already vehement, unsuspected, inward approach to each other, and the tides of passion that have been stored in the unconscious flood together, submerging them, who have lost all power of will.... This psychological process...is elevated by the poet into an objective experience of an existential absolute and described as an independent force, more than human, opening out to the transcendent."[20]

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[18] For a different view of the love as presented in Harawi, see Goléa, Rencontrez, pp. 51-52. Goléa's view that Messiaen is communicating through music with his first wife, Claire Delbos, seems to be a misleading interpretation of Messiaen's handling of the myth.

[19] Eduard Hanslick, Music Criticisms 1846-99, trans. Henry Pleasants (Baltimore: Penguin, 1963), p. 217. See also Campbell, p. 240.

Thus since this love is not possible to control rationally but is a kind of frenzy which is nevertheless heroic, it is also a participant in the demonic, It is the uncontrollable passion which motivated Paolo and Francesca in Dante's _Inferno_.[21] Here is potentially destructive passion. Yet it is also "star-linked," and the beloved in a sense is rightly called an "angel." It is the transcendent aspect of this anguished love which makes the apotheosis of the lovers possible later in the cycle.

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[20] Gottfried Weber, _Gottfried's von Strassburg Tristan und die Krise des hochmittelalterlichen Weltbildes um 1200_ (1953), p. 87, as quoted in Campbell, pp. 241-42.

[21] "One day we read for pastime how in thrall/ Lord Lancelot lay for love, who loved the Queen;/ We were alone--we thought no harm at all./ As we read on, our eyes met now and then,/ And to our cheeks the changing colour started,/ But just one moment

The images used in this poem do not create any new musical problems for Messiaen; the "Philtre à deux voix" is set to the melodic interval of a tritone, which, as has been noted above, Messiaen uses for poignant expressions, more angelic than devilish. However, in spite of the frequent association of the tritone and the philtre in the Tristan trilogy, it is not really tied to this image as a Leitmotive, nor, of course, does it constitute word-painting. Nevertheless, in this song Messiaen does take up certain specific musical problems. Here, at the halfway point in the cycle, the anxiety of the lovers is predominant, as it is all the way through the second unit of the cycle (Songs V-IX), and Messiaen needs to produce an expressive vehicle for the anxiety. At the same time, the idea of the lovers' farewell is very much in evidence, and Messiaen must also achieve a setting that can encompass this idea and its accompanying emotion without actually stopping the dramatic action and thus closing the cycle prematurely. He also is faced with the necessity of providing interconnections between this song and the songs preceeding and following.

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overcame us--when/ We read of the smile, desired of lips long-thwarted,/ Such smile, by such a lover kissed away,/ He that may never more from me be parted/ Trembling all over, kissed my mouth, I say/ ...we read no more that day" (Inferno, V, 127-38, trans. Dorothy Sayers).

Messiaen's solution to all these problems is to use the same thematic material which appeared in Song II and which will appear in a disguised form in Song IX, and which will finally return in its original state in Song XII. The repetition of an early theme at just this juncture makes both the original theme and its reappearance seem more significant to the listener, just as in the sonata form the development throws new light on the theme while the recapitulation again re-emphasizes its importance. Messiaen probably would deny that this recurrence of the theme is analogous to a recurrence in the sonata form; on occasion, he has said that the sonata form is no longer valid for modern music.[22] Whether or not this is a kind of development in which not much develops (akin to Messiaen's chord progressions which do not progress), the return of the theme does convince us that the song has a value beyond itself and that it stands at the crossroads, looking both backward and forward. The repetition at this particular point shows that this is an important link, the central link, in the chain of songs. And looking backward and forward, the dramatic action is kept from halting.

As suggested above, a kind of unity and intensification are brought to the cycle with the reappearance of the theme from the second song. How, then, is Messiaen able to avoid monotony when he uses such blatant repetition of thematic material in "Adieu"? He is able to cope with this by varying the accompaniment and also by varying the pianistic interludes. Further, he adds an entirely new section near the end of the piece, which is not like anything in Songs II or XI, nor like anything encountered in Song VII up to that point. The new section consists of only two chords which rock back and forth in both rapid (shorter note values) and slow (longer note values) motion. Thus, in this song, Messiaen achieves fulfillment of the traditional ideals of unity and variety.

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[22] Messiaen, with rare humor, thinks it an absurdity for the theme to enter and say, "I am the theme," and then after the development to come back and say, "Here I am again, I am the theme, do you recognize me?" (Samuel, p. 136).

The element of variety in the accompaniment is actually a reduction of elements from the earlier accompaniment, and also consists of a strengthening of the *fauxbourdon* chords of Song II. The left hand accompaniment from Song II is given to the right hand, and the new left hand accompaniment is a doubling of the same chords found in the right hand. The doubling is more apparent to the ear than to the eye, since there are only vertical intervals in the left hand, not full triads, but they are enough to make second inversion chords out of what had been first inversion chords. The penultimate chords, like the final chords of each phrase, are in root position. The harmonic progressions, earlier labelled somewhat "nineteenth century" in style, are preserved intact. The effect is powerful; what is sometimes termed an "unstable" chord (the chord of the second inversion) creates a feeling of strength when it is used in a series with other chords of the second inversion. This section is marked *forte* and "*Très* *lent, solennel et très soutenu*," the latter giving more than a hint of the section's effect (Appendix, example 18).

The pianistic interludes, sections B and C, are genuinely different from the earlier rhapsodic bird song of Song II. Now more chordal in nature, the chords themselves represent Messiaen's mature musical language as described in *The Technique of My Musical Language*. Section B, marked "*Un peu vif*," is characterized by chords which sound as if they are related to E^b but only as distant relatives. Messiaen's chords of superpositions and added tones are all present; clusters of major and minor seconds, various sizes of fourths and fifths, and chords containing both major and minor triads at once are combined with a non-driving rhythm--a rhythm that limps from triplet eighths to eighth notes to sixteenths without much feeling of purpose. The chords and rhythms are directed to be played "like bells" ("*comme des cloches*") (*Harawi*, p. 48, ms. 7-8).

A short C section, marked "*Très modéré*," appears; this has the dissonant chords of superpositions crowned by a chord, preceded by acciacaturas, to be played "like a Tam-Tam" ("*comme un Tam-Tam*"). This strong chord completes the C section, and the A section needs and gets no further introduction. Following the appearance of A, transformations of the B and C sections are heard. Then the familiar inexact or tonal retrograde of A is again presented; this time of necessity it is labeled D, since the place of C has been usurped by the second pianistic interlude. The theme is given a similiar accompaniment to that of A, but not an identical one, the *fauxbourdon* of Song II being replaced by chords which are not all chords of the second inversion. These block chords, outlining and strengthening the melodic and harmonic structure, intensify the text "Toi, de nuit, de fruit, de ciel, de jour,/ Aile d'amour."

Fairly straightforward repetitions of each of the four sections follow. At the fifth appearance of B, an intricate rhythmic canon on three staves is presented in which the entry in each voice is delayed by the value of an eighth note (Harawi, p. 52, ms. 1-8). The appearance of the music on three staves is similar to that of organ music, which is written usually for more than one manual plus pedal keyboard. Messiaen marks each chord with either dr (right hand) or g (left hand). This kind of notation makes possible the writing of a canon which would be virtually unreadable without the separation of the staves; also, it helps the performer to be intellectually aware of what he is playing.

At the next appearance of section A, the theme is transposed upward and rises to its highest point (b'') in the song. This is a climactic moment in the song, and the text set by the musical passage, marked fortissimo, is "désert qui pleure," making of it more than just a gentle dropping of tears. An expanded C section follows.

One would expect that since Messiaen is nearing the close of the song, he would be bringing back old material rather than introducing new, but such is not the case. Here, he adds the aforementioned new section, which I have labelled E, built solely on two dissonant chords which rock back and forth in both rapid and slow motion. These two chords may represent the philtre "à deux voix" (Appendix, example 19).

Although it seems as though it would be an odd place for new material, there is such economy of tonal material that the addition justifies itself. Messiaen then reiterates a C-like section, and finally closes the movement with three acciacatura-graced chords in the key of E^b.

VIII. "Syllabes"

"Syllabes" plays a unique function in the cycle, since it embodies a warning analogous to Brangäne's "Habet acht" in Act II of _Tristan und Isolde_, but this time the warning is distanced and transformed through an example of the "friendly animal" motif of folklore. Specifically, the animal is the monkey--or rather, monkeys which in South American folklore warn an Inca prince of danger and which thus save his life.[23] The presence of danger which necessitates the warning is indicative of the intense anxiety that underlies this unit of songs (Songs V-IX). Usually the ape or monkey in European folklore and legend is not helpful but is either devilish or tricky.[24] In South American folklore, references to helpful monkeys are few in number.[25] Claude Levi-Strauss' anthropological researches into South American mythology reveal monkeys which are not as helpful as they might be.[26] Thus the story of the Inca prince who is aided by monkeys is rare in the annals of folklore.

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[23] Rostand, _Olivier Messiaen_, p. 36.

[24] H. W. Janson, _Apes and Ape Lore in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance_, Studies of the Warburg Institute, 20, (London: Warburg Institute, 1952), p. 29 and _passim_.

[25] See Stith Thompson, _Motif-Index of Folk-Literature_, revised ed. (Bloomington: Indiana Univ. Press, 1955), vol. I, items B 441.1 and B 441.1.1.

Very striking in Messiaen's use of this folk material is the word that is repeated ("pia") as it is passed by the monkeys from tree to tree in order to warn the prince. This again is an onomatopoetic word, used over and over, along with the Quechua words "kahipipas," "mahipipas," and "doundou tchil." Indeed, these words, repeated again and again, form the basis for a substantial part of the song; in the fifteen-page song, these onomatopoetic words take up two-thirds of its length. The text of this song may be translated as follows:

> Green dove,
> The number five to you,
> The double of the violet will double,
> Very far, very low.
> O my heaven, you flower,
> Piroutcha mia!
> Let us spread out from heaven,
> Piroutcha mia!

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[26] Claude Levi-Strauss, *From Honey to Ashes*, *Introduction to a Science of Mythology*, II (London: Jonathan Cape, 1972), pp. 61-62, cites the example of the Iranxé or Münkü legend of the man who is unable to get down from a tree, and is hence thirsting and starving. The monkey brings him water or fruit juice, but claims to be too weak to help the man down from the tree.

O let us blossom from water,

Piroutcha mia!

Kahipipas, mahipipas.

Pia, pia, pia, doundou tchil.

The familiar image of the "Colombe verte" begins the poem, followed by the puzzling line "La chiffre cinq à toi" ("The number five to you"). Here Goléa is of no assistance: "Who can say what the meaning of the number five is? Is it an astral symbol?"[27] Somehow Messiaen feels that the number five is particularly appropriate for the beloved.

A key to Messiaen's numerology in general and to his use of the number five in particular may be given by Tanneguy de Quénetain, who notes that in his religious works his "theology sometimes manifests itself in a surprisingly naive numerical symbolism" and calls attention especially to the symbolism inherent in the numerical order of the pieces in _Vingt regards sur l'Enfant Jesus_. Thus, for example, "the sixth piece, which evokes creation by the Word ('without which nothing was made') is in this particular position because the numerical six is the number for the Creation," etc.[28] Following up this hint, we find that No. 5 of _Vingt regards sur l'Enfant Jesus_ is labelled "Regard du Fils sur le Fils." The following description is significant: "The Son, the Word of God looks upon the Son, the child Jesus. There are two superimposed textures, a rhythmic canon consisting of two streams of homophonic chords against a statement of the 'thème de Dieu,' symbolizing the two natures of Christ: human and divine."[29] Thus the number five for Messiaen is associated with duality, especially as expressed in the two natures of Christ. In his earlier _Poèmes pour Mi_ and _Chants de Terre et de Ciel_, the same principle of duality had been translated into a struggle between the spiritual and the physical--a struggle which is characterized by very human anguish. In Song VIII, in which the number five is attributed to the beloved, she is hence also visualized in terms of a duality which is divided between heaven and earth, struggling with spiritual and physical realities.

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[27] Goléa, _Rencontrez_, p. 165.

[28] Quénetain, p. 10.

A further level of meaning also may be uncovered if we note that in the Middle Ages the number five commonly referred to the five wounds of Christ.[30] Here is anguish in which the God-man Jesus participates, and it is an anguish which is redemptive. Thus the number five is supremely associated with pain, suffering, and anguish, and at the same time it strongly suggests an experience which leads to a goal which is ultimately desirable.

As in Song I, the beloved is also said to be metaphorically a flower--a double violet which will double. In the expansive mood of love, everything the beloved touches blossoms ("O mon ciel tu fleuris") and the lovers themselves wish to spread out from heaven ("O déplions du ciel") like a beautiful rainbow. The reference to water ("O fleurissons de l'eau") links this song with Song II, where water is connected to fertile images of fruit and flower, and to the spiritual image of heaven. Furthermore, this song is also linked to Song IX where relationships between water, time, and heaven are created by Messiaen through constant reiteration and juxtaposition, and through the use of parallel phrases such as "Eye of water," "Eye of time," and "Eye of heaven" which imply parallel meanings. Following the first complete statement of the text comes the warning word of the monkeys; it will be explained below how this word is used structurally.

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[29] Program notes compiled by Robert Sherlaw Johnson for Messiaen's _Vingt regards sur l'Enfant Jesus_ (Argo ZRG 650-51).

[30] Ferguson, p. 154.

The text of Song VIII thus is dependent upon a dualism which involves two conflicting sets of ideas, both highly charged with emotion. One is of the expanding love of the two principals in the drama, while the other, which cuts across the whole structure of the song, is the warning which announces an awareness of danger because of threatening persons or situations. The warning given in this song, as in Wagner's _Tristan_ _und_ _Isolde_, is akin to the medieval _alba_, sung by the watchman--the lovers' friend or confidant--to warn them of the approach of dawn and of the imminent return of danger, perhaps in the form of the lady's husband. Such a song is "Reis glorios" of the troubadour Guiraut de Bornelh. According to Saville, such an _alba_ represents the call of Conscience to lovers who are entirely immersed in pleasure and who are faced with separation:

> This separation takes place in time, and is due to time. The sun rising, _is_ time; and because of it the lovers must part. If the lovers had their way, if the pleasure principle ruled the universe, nothing would ever change, no one would ever grow old, the love affair--and, indeed, this single night of the love affair--would go on forever. The lovers want to reject time, to blot it out. But the movement of time appears at the very foundation of the dramatic events in the _alba_: the change from night to day, the dawn itself.... The night of union changes to the day of separation; there is no stasis in human life; the joy of love cannot last; and, finally, life itself must give way--in process of time--to death. The lovers do not want to accept time; but the watchman, proponent of the reality principle, keeps reminding them of the existence of time, keeps telling them that in the world of nature time cannot be avoided.[31]

For Saville, the _alba_ is thus a kind of dialogue which depends upon the duality of the psyche, which he sees as divided between conscience and desire for physical pleasure. Messiaen would use a different terminology, but otherwise should accept Saville's description of the duality present in Song VIII.

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[31] Saville, p. 180.

Of course it should be noted that while Messiaen sets the most blissful condition of the lovers in Song I against a night-time scene, he does not always dramatize such a strong fear and hatred of the day as we find in the traditional *alba* and in the second act of Wagner's *Tristan und Isolde*. Yet the day is the time associated with parting and with intense anxiety about the relationship of the lovers. Messiaen's song VIII is also, of course, further distanced from the medieval or Wagnerian models by his use of a "spoken" warning by apes from Peruvian folklore.

In addition to the problem of setting up the conflict in his verse as described above, Messiaen chooses to utilize folksong materials in ways which require intricate solutions. He thus borrows from a Peruvian folk tune, "Tikata tarpuinikiču,"[32] in order to derive the melodic basis for the section dealing with the expanding love of the two lovers. Melodic materials as well as verbal borrowing are incorporated into Messiaen's composition, for this Peruvian song is the source of the words "Kahipipas, mahipipas." Thus Messiaen must weave a structure incorporating both the complex subject and the foreign musical material, and we find his solution to the problems presented in this song are different from anything he has provided so far.

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[32] D'Harcourt, I, 493-94.

The folk tune which Messiaen uses as a kind of germ for generating his melodic material consists of four musical phrases, only a part of which he utilizes (Appendix, example 20). It will be seen that Messiaen uses this germ very freely. Only a few notes of the first phrase are used in a recognizable way, and that is utilized in the portion of the song with French text. The curve of the folk song is also much altered by Messiaen's use in the setting of the words "Colombe, colombe verte" (Appendix, example 21). The second phrase of the folk song is used after all the French text has been stated once, and that phrase, transformed from perfect fourths into tritones and transposed down in pitch, sets the same words as does the folk song ("kaypipas" and "maypipas," spelled by Messiaen "kahipipas" and "mahipipas," and meaning "here" and "there"). Phrases 3 and 4 of the folk song are not used, even in the free manner shown above.

Messiaen's melodic line for the soprano voice begins with the aforementioned transformation of the Peruvian folk song, outlining an e dorian mode. The melody beginning at that point is a composed one, setting the text "Le chiffre cinq à toi" (Harawi, p. 55, ms. 3-5). Messiaen could have taken an obvious way out by using a fifth to set the phrase, but again he does not solve his musical problems in the easiest manner available to him. In the phrase "La violette double doublera," the word "violette" is set to triplet rhythms, a repetition of the triplet rhythm which sets "Colombe, co-" in the first line of the poetic text. The choice of this rhythm seems to be based on the word accents. The melodic line descends chromatically on "La violette." "Très loin" is set to an ascending minor third, and "tout bas" goes from low to high, instead of descending to a low note, as one might have done in the sixteenth, seventeenth, or eighteenth centuries.

The accompaniment for this four-phrase section is chromatic, using all twelve tones, beginning with the chords setting "Colombe, colombe verte" which suggest e minor or the e dorian mode. For that phrase, each of the chords is related either to the tonic in e minor or to a b^b minor chord in enharmonic spelling. For "Le chiffre cinq à toi," the chords consist of a G major chord, followed by one built on F major with added sixth and seventh; next comes a chord which suggests both A^b major and minor. The phrase ends with an e minor chord in second inversion with added sixth. The chords do not enchain by means of a common tone. The accompaniment for the third phrase consists of a preponderance of elevenths, thirteenths, and augmented sevenths and ninths, and both melody and harmony outline a descending upper tetrachord in E major--a dissonant E major, however, with added tones. The closing phrase again is made up of elevenths, ninths, and chords with added notes. The last two chords suggest a dissonant and indecisive V^7 to I cadence in G major--dissonant, since the V^7 contains two foreign tones, E^b and A^b, which nearly efface the chord's identity; and indecisive, since the tonic is actually I^6 with added sixth.

The setting for the next section of the text, "O mon ciel tu fleuris/ Piroutcha mia," is composed of tritones of both types, augmented fourths and diminished fifths, and also includes perfect fourths. The last part of the phrase "Piroutcha mia" is set to a descending curve (Harawi, p. 56, ms. 1). The melodic phrase setting "O mon ciel tu fleuris" and "Piroutcha mia," essentially tritonal in nature, is repeated three times with the rest of the text embodying the lovers' wish to spread out from heaven and the desire to blossom from water. Water, it is to be recalled, is the symbol for regeneration, the aid to plant growth and fertility, and the source of cleansing as in the rite of baptism.

The accompaniment for this tritonal section consists of a sequence of chords, descending by small steps and with the regular rhythmic pattern of sixteenth notes. "Kahipipas" and "mahipipas" are set to descending tritones, as mentioned above, and then begins the "Pia, pia, pia" portion of the song. The rest of the piece is simply an alternation of the two sections, with the musical settings for the French text returning two more times. Thus one may consider the repetitions of "pia" to be (1) an interruption of the text, (2) an outgrowth of the sections containing the French text, or, as I have indicated above, (3) a kind of binary alternation between the two sections, one with the French text carrying the lush sentiments of the lovers and the other carrying the warning in onomatopoetic sounds.

The "pias," in their three appearances, are repeated on one tone 275 times; toward the end of the warning, the tempo accelerates and the dynamics increase. The directions to singer and accompanist are "pressez beaucoup" and "crescendo molto." The effect is that of climax through accumulation, acceleration, and increase of volume. I do not believe that a single word has ever been used before in vocal music to create just this effect and to build such a structure. The closest parallels that come to mind are: dance, which repeats a motion over and over; drum-playing, which is based on repetitions and also accelerations; or the pure instrumental repetitions in Ravel's Bolero. In the Bolero, Ravel repeats a melodic phrase tirelessly with an ostinato rhythm.[33] Toward the end of the piece, there is a striking modulation, but this is almost the only luxury of expansion that Ravel will permit himself. Messiaen limits his material even more severely in "Syllabes" since his musical materials consist of one word, one tone, and one rhythmic pattern.

It is, of course, not true that Messiaen repeats everything flatly without change; the second time that the "kahipipas, mahipipas" material appears, the syllables are reversed to create the synthetic words "pipas kahi" and "pipas mahi." Appropriately, the reversal of the syllables is set to ascending, rather than descending tritones. And the chords of the accompaniment change iridescently under the single tone of the vocal melody, creating a harmonic litany of incomparable length (Harawi, p. 67, ms. 1-7).

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[33] For an interesting analysis of the composition, see Claude Levi-Strauss, "'Bolero' de Maurice Ravel," L'Homme (1971), pp. 5-14.

One other interesting device which Messiaen uses in this song should be mentioned. He builds a structure for the words "kahipipas" and "mahipipas" by preceding the first appearance of "kahipipas" with one chord. The following that word, there are two chords; after "mahipipas," three chords; and after the next "kahipipas," four chords. Messiaen, after building up the structure, then reverses the order: he uses the pattern of one word, three chords, one word, two chords, and one word, one chord. Messiaen seems to delight in this sort of intellectual game. Though we have apprehended him playing with all manner of rhythmic and structural techniques, no game is played harder than the one in which "pia" is repeated to the point where another composer would fear that the monotony would result in boredom overcoming the listener. But Messiaen never seems to worry about such matters, for he considers them perhaps the personal problem of the listener.

IX. "L'Escalier redit, gestes du soleil"

"L'Escalier redit, gestes du soleil," as the ninth song in the cycle, is particularly important. First, it closes the second unit of songs which begins with Song V. Second, the importance which Messiaen attached to it is made clear by the fact that he has given it the ninth place in the cycle--and for Messiaen the number nine holds a special significance. Third, here is the song which deals with the love-death material that Messiaen found in the Tristan story, especially as he found it in Wagner's music drama.

For Messiaen, the number nine holds the significance of maternity, and it also signifies Time. Thus the ninth piece in Messiaen's Vingt regards sur l'Enfant Jesus is entitled "Regard du Temps" and is described as follows: "The mystery of Time which sees the Eternal One born within it."[34] As the number for the Incarnation of Christ, therefore, the number nine particularly links together ideas of transcendence and time in a manner that stresses the human predicament--the condition of creatures existing in time with its distorting power and its ability to cause anguish to the soul.

In this song, the lovers descend ("Each step toward the south") the Staircase of Time. In a sense it is true that Time is the staircase. Their falling into love is the means by which they become humanized, just as through birth Christ was made man. The lovers, as they move downward toward their love-death, are described as "Of water, of time," and "of heaven."

The text for Song IX is the longest of the cycle, and is translated as follows:

He no longer speaks,
the staircase smiles,
Each step toward the south.
Of heaven, of water, of time,
staircase of time.
His eye is wasteland,

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[34] Quoted in record jacket notes to Vingt regards.

light in secret.
Clear stone and clear sun.
Of water, or time, of heaven,
Staircase of heaven.
You, my little cinder, are there,
your temples green, mauve,
on water.
Like death.
Eye of water.

Staircase repeats,
gestures of the sun,
color of new silence.
Of water, of time, of heaven,
staircase of heaven.
I wait in the green,
starred by love.
It is so simple being dead.
Of time, of heaven, of water,
staircase of water.
You, my little cinder, are there,
your temples of green,of mauve,
on time.
Like death.
Eye of time.

Of heaven, of water, of time,
Your present eye which breathes,
Of water, of time, of heaven,
The heart of the mad clock.
Death is there, my green dove.
Death is there, my limpid pearl.
Death is there.
We sleep far from time in your gaze.

I am dead.
Water will go over our heads,
guardian sun.
Fire will eat our sighs.
Philtre of two voices.
Our glances from beginning to end,
seen by death.
Let us invent a fashionable love
So we may seek ourselves,
so we may mourn ourselves,
so we may dream ourselves,
so we may find ourselves,
Of heaven, of water, of time,
your heart which beats,
my fruit, my portion of darkness,
you are there, you.

Love, joy!

Silence is dead,
embrace time.
Sun of joyous cries.
Of time, of heaven, of water.
Staircase of water.
Gaiety flourishes
in the arms of heaven.
Fan in the guise of a bird-song.
Of heaven, of water, of time,
staircase of time.
My little cinder, you are there,
your temples green, mauve,
on heaven,
your temples on the heaven.
Like death.
Eye of heaven.

The precise nature of the love-death in this song may not be spelled out, but its presence here is undeniable. The ambiguity of the text may, of course, be deliberate. Messiaen may be playing a game of multiple choice in which one, two, or three of the following responses are true: (1) It is a real death of the lovers, as suggested by such lines as "I am dead." (2) It is only the fear of death which is involved--the fear with which we must come to terms in the process of "seek[ing] ourselves." (3) It is a metaphorical death such as is encountered in sexual ecstasy--a death which phenomenologically has been understood in terms of a return to chaos and reintegration. In any case, this poem, which represents the highest point of anxiety in the cycle, keeps death before us as a constant presence. Repeated like a litany are the words "La mort est là, ma colombe verte./ La mort est là, ma perle limpide./ La mort est là."

"It is so simple being dead," says the persona (or is the poet-composer himself speaking?) in the second stanza. Here is dramatized his weariness with life and his wish to escape--a direct death wish. Then later, in stanza 3, he says, "I am dead." The lovers' amorous glances have been seen by death, and hence has come about this union of love and death. In all of human life, death is inescapable, but here is a treatment of the subject of death which raises the unpleasant reality to a high level of art.

What is remarkable here is that with so heavy an emphasis on death, the poem in actuality, in spite of the anxieties of living which cry out for release, is an affirmation of life. "L'amour, la joie!" exults the poet. The sun is "of joyous cries" ("Le soleil aux gaieté fleurit/ dans les bras du ciel"). If Messiaen intends us to understand a real death here, the death of the lovers is an ascent into the omniscient "Eye of heaven."

Obviously for Messiaen the "Eye of heaven" is symbolic of a state of transcendence set off against the temporal order. In Song IX, the most important metaphor for time is the "staircase," which may be analyzed as a device for ascending or descending. But as the text of Song VI has indicated, the ascent or descent involves movement which is winding or circular. Because for Messiaen time is not linear, it is the essential ingredient in the agony of life--which, paradoxically, is also the joy and ecstasy of existence.

It also becomes particularly apparent at this point that time as Messiaen conceives it is of the essence of music, which cannot exist without duration. Like the constricting "staircase of time," Messiaen's musical language severely limits his expression of the Tristan and Isolde myth in the cycle Harawi, and yet it opens up new paths which lead not only to the apotheosis of the lovers on one level, but also to a higher sophistication and achievement on the aesthetic level.

Of the four stanzas of the text of this song, the first, second, and fourth are parallel in construction; the fourth and ninth lines of each stanza, for example, use the formula "of heaven, of water, of time," but vary the order to the three elements in each instance. In addition, the same formula appears three times in the irregular stanza (stanza 3). "Sur de l'eau," "sur de temps," and "sur du ciel" appear near the close of stanzas 1, 2, and 4 respectively, and each of these stanzas closes with a similar pair of lines: for the first stanza, "Comme la mort./ L'oeil de l'eau"; for the second, "Comme la mort./ L'oeil du temps"; and for the fourth, "Comme la mort./ L'oeil du ciel." Here another staircase is ascended; from the water of regeneration, through time and experience, and up to the heaven the lovers ascend through the means of love and death.

The musical structure that Messiaen forges for this song is dictated by the form of the verses, as described in the previous paragraph. The three parallel stanzas--1, 2, and 4--and the irregular third stanza are translated into a musical structure of AABA. The A section is made up of many varied ideas, the structure being essentially an additive one of linked phrases as in a troubadour song. Thus the A section can be rendered schematically as aabcaabcb a/2.

Section B, however, is not accessible to such a schematic reduction. In it, there are two basic themes, each of which is put through Messiaen's range of permutational techniques, creating, as is fitting for a B section, a structure more dependent on development than is the A section. Following the B section, there is a separate, transitional passage consisting of the setting of the verse "L'amour la joie"; this passage is marked by solid chords in the accompaniment, with both voice and piano directed to perform it _Très lent_ and _fortissimo_. The statement of "L'amour, la joie" is followed by the last appearance of the A section.

The structure Messiaen has chosen for this song is not in itself radically destructive of time; rather, it builds structure in quite a conventional way. What is particularly Messiaen's own metaphor for the wish to destroy conventional march-time is his frequent use of the device of development by elimination; phrases which are full length on their first appearance will lose a motif from the entire phrase on their next appearance. The opposite technique, which involves adding to a phrase, is also used, so that the alternation of longer and shorter phrases keeps the listener in a state of unrest, at least subliminally aware that things are changing around him and that the music is constantly preparing surprises for him.

The melodic line opening the song, setting the words "Il ne parle plus," is very static; it consists of one tone, $b^{b'}$, repeated, moving up one step and then back down to B^{b}. The static melody is coupled with steady eighth note values, plus one added value, the penultimate eighth note of the phrase being lengthened by half its value: (♪.). Messiaen has noted that the longer added values have the effect of retarding the musical phrase,[35] and the effect here is also that of destroying the march-like rhythm set up by the eighth notes. The chordal progressions beneath the melodic line are quite dissonant, consisting of chords of superpositions, played by hands alternating, giving a kind of "leaping" effect. Somehow, the dissonant chords, ending at the cadence with an enharmonically spelled V^7 in both E and E^{b} at once, sound as if they are within the context of the E^{b} tonality. Messiaen fills out the measure (which by conventional standards would be considered irrational because of the added value) with an ostinato pattern, made up of sixteenth notes in triplets, and repeated three times (Harawi, p. 70, ms. 1). Messiaen's musical setting seems to be an apt metaphor for experience and emotion in a work dealing with time--and, more specifically, with the pain of time and the need to endure through experience. Its appropriateness is due to its static melody, its dissonant, non-progressing chords, and its delaying rhythm.

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[35] _Technique of My Musical Language_, I, 17.

While "L'escalier sourit" is set to the same musical phrase that has been described above, the next phrase, "Chaque marche vers le sud," has its own setting, an ascending and descending melodic line outlining both a major and a minor seventh tonic chord in E^b, but ironically hitting the E natural at the bottom of the descent. In this instance, the rhythm which renders the even eighth note pattern irrational is a sixteenth note and, as Messiaen notes, the use of a shorter added value has the effect of accelerating the phrase.[36] The accompaniment chosen for this phrase differs from the earlier leaping dissonant chords; in the right hand, these chords are in a medium range and possess a steady eighth note rhythm, with the exception of the one sixteenth note value, and in the left hand a constant sixteenth note ostinato pattern is heard. The left hand ostinato pattern in conjunction with the right hand chords make up a progression of chords which can be roughly related to the E^b tonal center, modulating at the end to C. The progression is as follows: (1) a thirteenth built on the dominant of E^b; (2) tonic in first inversion with added augmented fourth; (3) a dominant seventh in third inversion with a flatted seventh; (4) a D^b tonic in first inversion with added augmented fourth, functioning as both a flat major VII in E^b and also as a Neapolitan sixth to the following chord; (5) a thirteenth built on the dominant of C, in the third inversion.

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[36] Ibid., I, 17.

For "Du ciel, de l'eau, du temps," Messiaen chooses a melodic line made up of the descending tritones which are so prominent in his work and which, as Mellers notes, are transformed by him from their former association with the Devil and with evil.[37] "L'escalier du temps" outlines a diminished triad. The rhythmic pattern is short-long, short-long, short-long, long-short-long (non-retrogradable), added value (♪.), the series ending with a half note. The harmonic background, given in the piano part, is an ostinato of two chords, a dominant chord in second inversion in the key of C major, with added augmented fourth and added sixth, moving to an E^b tonic in second inversion with added augmented fourth (Harawi, p. 70, ms. 4 and p. 71, ms. 1). The ostinato pattern comes to rest on the first chord. A shimmering arpeggio combining an E major tetrachord and a diminished triad on A# concludes the setting of the first five lines of the stanza, and also joins it to the next portion of the text (Harawi, p. 71, ms. 1, arpeggio only).

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[37] Mellers, Caliban Reborn, p. 104.

The musical setting for the first five lines of text is repeated verbatim for the text "Son oeil est désert,/ lumière en secret./ Pierre claire et soleil clair./ De l'eau, du temps, du ciel, l'escalier du ciel." Here again Messiaen utilizes one bit of musical writing applicable to a second text. However, following the repetition, new material is added. The new section has a melodic line which descends from $a^{b''}$ by means of the intervals of a whole step, a diminished fifth, and another whole step; then it goes back up to $g^{b''}$ and descends by means of the same intervals; from $d^{b''}$ it descends again by means of a whole step, a half step, and another whole step. Rising again to g'', it outlines the E^{b} major chord, which relates the entire section, in retrospect, to the E^{b} major tonality.[38] There are some tones that pull the tonality temporarily into the ambiance of e^{b} minor, and some "blue" chords at the cadence setting the words "sur de l'eau" (an augmented ninth on D^{b} followed by an augmented eleventh on C^{b}) and the words "L'oeil de l'eau" (an eleventh with a flatted ninth on B^{b} and a D^{b} chord of the second inversion with an added major second). These chords, as previously suggested, sound as if they belong in a jazz composition, which curiously is a kind of music that Messiaen claims to dislike.[39] Aside from the matter of his preferences and prejudices, in this instance I think it is fair to say that his work is not untouched by the influence of jazz sounds.

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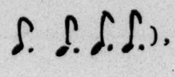
[38] This descending line can be seen as related to the last half of the second theme of the B section.

[39] Samuel, p. 207.

Following "sur de l'eau" and "Comme la mort," there is a sequence of broken chords that descend by means of whole tone steps; each time a single tone is heard, it is followed by a chord built a half step above the main whole-tone pattern (Harawi, p. 72, ms. 7). The triplet ostinato pattern, heard following each "a" of the first A section, rings out again and is repeated fifteen times. Then the whole process begins for the second A, in which the lines are parallel in construction to the first A. The weary words, "It is so simple being dead," are heard in this section, set to the sinuously rising and falling line that seems related to the same kind of line in section B. The line, which relates to an E^b tonality almost throughout its length, ironically leaves the E^b tonality for its last tone, E.

As noted above, the B section is built on what are essentially two themes, with additions, eliminations (elisions), and permutations. The first theme, with its three motifs, is as follows (Appendix, example 22). This theme is cut into its three component motives, and the motives are then dropped out or used in varying orders. For example, the first time the theme returns, it is used verbatim; however, the second time the material is repeated, only motives 1 and 2 are used and in reverse order. The first theme is used for the phrase "Du ciel, de l'eau, du temps"--the phrase that was, earlier in this song, given a tritone setting but with the same rhythmic pattern as in this instance.

The second theme is essentially a rising and falling melodic curve and, as noted above, is related to the theme of section A which sets the words "Ma petite cendre tu es là,/ tes tempes vertes, mauves/ sur de l'eau." As Robert Sherlaw Johnson notes, this theme also relates to Song II (i.e., to the melodic setting for the words "Étoile enchaînée/ Ombre partagée"). This is the cyclic theme that has been observed in connection with Songs VII and XII as well (Appendix, example 23). The changes Messiaen rings on the second theme include: (1) using only the first half, the ascent; (2) using only the second half, the descent; (3) beginning the descending part of the theme higher and carrying it lower; (4) beginning the ascending part of theme higher and adding notes to its ascending side, then delaying the descent by means of an added rhythmic value on the pivotal notes, and at the last, cutting short the descent; (5) taking the ascending part of the theme to the unprecedented height of b'' (unprecedented, that is, in the cycle so far and not attained again except for a cry on c''' in Song XI), sung fff and held for the length of a whole note tied to a quarter note, then increasing the length of of the descent by adding notes and making the intervals between each note shorter; and (6) cutting the last five notes from that lengthened descent of theme 2 and repeating the five-note sequence three times. This second theme in its first appearance begins on an e^{b}', rises to g'', and then by descent returns only part of the way to $b^{b'}$. The long, wildly ascending and descending passage, reaching a fortissimo dynamic level at the point of turning, is the setting for the lines "Ton oeil present qui respire" as well as "Le coeur de l'horloge folle," and the phrase seems capable of embodying both the idea of the eye that breathes and the clock that goes mad.[40]

The permutations of the second theme set a text that deals with such diverse images as water passing over our head (the melody soars), fire eating our sighs (again, the melody rises), glances being seen by death, and "a fashionable love" being invented. This is the point, described above, at which the melody soars to its highest point, and also reaches an intensely strong dynamic level. The highest point is reached on the first syllable of the word "monde." The syllable is held for a long duration (five quarter notes) fortissimo; following this painfully long-half note, the descent occurs. Instead of proceeding on down to the tonic, the final resolution is delayed by four repetitions of a phrase made up of the last five notes taken from the second half of theme 2, an instance once again of development by elimination. These repetitions set the parallel phrases "So we may seek ourselves," "So we may mourn ourselves," "So we may dream ourselves," "So we may find ourselves." The first theme closes the B section with its first and third motives augmented (), then the second and first parts augmented (♩ ♩ ♩ ♩), and finally the third part augmented (♩. ♩.), followed by a 2-1 cadence (interrupted by two quarter-note rests). The augmentations serve to lengthen out and to sober up what was a jaunty, jerky rhythm.

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[40] For a visual representation of a mad clock, see Jean Arp's The Watch (1932); reproduced in Patrick Waldberg, Surrealism (New York: McGraw-Hill, n.d.), p. 35.

The harmonic background for this rather ingenious thematic alteration is almost completely late nineteenth century in its use of a tonal center (E^{b} major) with many altered chords which can be related in function to the tonic (e.g., ^{b}VII, ^{b}ii, ^{b}VI, III #3, etc.). The B section ends with an ostinato chord pattern harmonizing theme 1, ending on the subdominant of E^{b} with the ubiquitous added sixth (Harawi, p. 79, ms. 6-14.) As noted above, the transition is a setting of the text "L'amour, la joie!" The melody begins on e^{b}, rises to a^{b}, descends by way of g^{b}, and comes to rest on d^{b}; thirteenth chords, a ninth chord, and a half-diminished seventh chord accompany this melody.

We return to the A section for a setting of the fourth and last stanza beginning "Le silence est mort." Everything is as before, except that there is slightly more development by elimination (the truncated and repeated pieces of theme are needed to cover the added line of text plus some repetitions of text that were not present before). The piece closes with twenty-three repetitions of the triplet ostinato theme over a long-held and later repeated pedal, a tonic chord in the second inversion with an added sixth. The words "Comme la mort./ L'oeil du ciel" are set to the same notes and rhythmic values as in their earlier appearances, but they are given importance and finality in the way the line resolves upward instead of downward.

The piece, at once focusing on death and on joy, seems to have caused Messiaen considerable pains during its composition, if we may judge from the many ingenious changes he rings on the themes in the B section. But he achieves a structure which is capable of splendidly expressing the love-death theme as derived from the Tristan myth at the core of the cycle.

CHAPTER IV

HARAWI: *SONG OF LOVE AND DEATH*:

PART III: APOTHEOSIS

X. "Amour oiseau d'étoile"

Since Song IX closes the second unit of songs in the cycle, Song X, "Amour oiseau d'étoile," begins the last group. Here Messiaen celebrates the apotheosis of the lovers. The agony and anxiety of the lovers' guilty love has been purged away, and the imagery which Messiaen now draws upon is of heaven, bird, star--all images of transcendence. The text of Song X may be translated as follows:

> Bird of the star,
> Your eye which sings,
> Toward the stars,
> Your head reversed under heaven.
> Your eye of star,
> Links falling,
> Toward the stars,
> Shortest pathway from shadow to heaven.
> All the birds of the stars,
> Far from the painting by hands sing,
> Star, silence augments from heaven,
> My hands, your eye, your neck, heaven.

The source for this song is principally a surrealist painting entitled *The Invisible Isle* (1936) by Roland Penrose.[1] The painting shows, in the foreground, a disembodied head of a young woman hanging downward from the dark sky with white clouds at the top of the canvas. In the center is a tiny island with small buildings, and the long hair of the disproportionately larger head hangs down onto the island and envelops it. From the bottom of the painting, hands reach up in an attempt to touch the hair. Typically, Messiaen chooses to interpret the latent symbolism in the painting as representing an attempt to link the heavenly and the earthly, the spiritual and the physical. Unless this interpretation is forced on the painting as the only meaning, his way of looking at it seems to have both emotional and intellectual validity.

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[1] Goléa, *Rencontrez*, p. 169; Robert Sherlaw Johnson, record

All of the phrases and images of the poem can be related in some way to the painting. "Your head reversed under heaven" ("Ta tête à l'envers sous le ciel") is, of course, a direct reference to the painting. Other images, such as the birds and stars, also are, as noted above, links between heaven and earth. We recall also that birds and stars function as symbols which are identified with the forces of rescue that are able to assist one out of the abyss. In this instance, the beloved is addressed

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jacket notes for Harawi. According to personal correspondence from the painter, the location of The Invisible Isle is "shrouded in mystery" (letter of July 19, 1973). Sir Roland Penrose continues: "I made an exchange with a friend in France just before the war and with the chaos that followed it just disappeared and neither of us have been able to trace it at all." A reproduction of the painting may be found in Waldberg, fig. 90. Messiaen has told me that he has only seen a reproduction of the painting.

as "Bird of the star" ("Oiseau d'étoile"), and her eye "sings/ Toward the stars."

Eyes are, of course, very important in this cycle as in any poetry about love. Since the Middle Ages, lovers have often been presented gazing into each other's eyes. Dante had spoken of Beatrice's eyes as "the origin of love."[2] Gottfried's Tristan and Isolde thus exchange amorous glances: "When from time to time they tried to observe each other through eyes which Love had limed, their flesh assumed the hue of their hearts and souls."[3] And: "One look, one tender glance from the eyes of one's beloved will surely quench a myriad pangs of body and soul. One kiss from one's darling's lips that comes stealing from the depths of her heart--how it banishes love's cares!"[4] In Song I of _Harawi_, Messiaen had written the words "L'oeil immobile, sans denouer ton regard" ("The eye immobile, without unravelling your glance"), while "Ton oeil tous les ciels, doundou tchil" ("Your eye all the heavens") had appeared in Song V. In the song "Action de grâces" in _Poèmes pour Mi_, the _persona_ had said, "Et un oeil près de mon oeil,/ une pensée près de ma pensée" ("And an eye close to my eye, a thought close to my thought"); here the eye is the means of communication between husband and wife, the language of the eyes which is important as shared thoughts. In "Bail avec Mi," subtitled pour ma femme, from Chants de Terre et de Ciel, the poet says, "Ton oeil de terre,/ mon oeil de terre" ("Your mortal eye, my mortal eye"), as if eyes are so basic to an individual and to a relationship that they are a metaphor for the ground of one's being and for the transcendent bond which unites the couple. It should not be surprising that Messiaen will use the imagery of the "Eye of heaven" to represent the sphere of transendence itself in Song IX of Harawi.

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[2] Dante, _The New Life_, trans. William Anderson (Baltimore: Penguin, 1964), p. 67.

[3] Gottfried von Strassburg, _Tristan_, trans. A. T. Hatto (Baltimore: Penguin, 1960), p. 198.

[4] _Ibid._, p. 204.

In Song X, the eye as a symbol of the lovers' glances and also of transcendence is juxtaposed with stars, with singing, with birds. These juxtapositions, however, are indicative of more than casual connections, since all of these images are in some way associated with transcendence, with the passage from earth to heaven.[5] In the painting by Penrose, the eye is near heaven--hence it is like both bird and star--and because it is like a bird, it presumably is able to sing. As Messiaen puts it in the opening two lines of his poem, "Oiseau d'étoile,/ Ton oeil qui chante...."

The star imagery is, needless to say, also extremely important for Messiaen in the cycle. He had always been fascinated by stars, which also appear in surrealist paintings (e.g., Joan Miro's "Women, Bird by Moonlight"[6]). The term star may also be taken in its popular sense, meaning "am important charismatic person," as in the painting by Valentine Hugo which shows six "stars" of surrealism--Paul Eluard, André Breton, Tristan Tzara, Benjamin Péret, René Crevel, and René Char.[7] Each face is shown as a brilliant star in a dark sky, with faces narrowed and luminous, and with flashes of light around their heads.

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[5] See, for example, Messiaen's statement, quoted by Mari, p. 56, that God is the unique bird of eternity.

[6] William Gaunt, The Surrealists (New York: Putnam, 1972), Pl. 48.

"Far from the painting my hands sing" ("Loin du tableau mes mains chantent"), Messiaen writes, referring of course to the Penrose painting. While we cannot exactly identify the poet-composer with the persona of this poem, the conclusion seem unavoidable that these hands are also those of the musician whose hands sing at keyboard and writing desk. The poet too has been called a singer since ancient Greek times.[8] In the last line of the poem, the man's hands, the woman's eye, her neck, and heaven are all linked; as in the painting the hands just touch the woman's hair, with her neck disappearing into clouds and forming the link with heaven.[9] Here at last is a symbolic presentation through images of a state which rises above the anxiety and agony of the middle unit of songs in the cycle. In their apotheosis--an apotheosis which receives its visual stimulus from the Penrose painting--the lovers achieve a resplendent close to their story.

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[7] Waldberg, fig. 72.

[8] See John Hollander, The Untuning of the Sky (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton Univ. Press, 1961), p. 13.

[9] For another opinion on this painting, see Goléa, Rencontrez, p. 169.

In Song X, Messiaen must solve the problem of creating a musical metaphor for a painting, the work by Roland Penrose to which reference has been made above and which features a woman's head, reversed under heaven, with the hand or hands reaching up to touch the hair. Musical compositions inspired by works of art of visual images are, of course, not new; a number of Debussy's works are directly inspired by visual or literary images, one of the most memorable being the three Nocturnes inspired by (1) clouds, (2) a festival, and (3) Homer's sirens sitting singing on the rocks. Debussy's painting of pictures in sound is always very subtle; he once insisted that his Voiles, for example, was anything but "A Postcard for the 15th of August!" Messiaen, too, finds subtle ways of making connections between his sources in the other arts and his musical language. In this song, "Amour oiseau d'étoile," the musical metaphors chosen for the link between earth and heaven are twofold, one structural and the other harmonic.

Messiaen's first metaphor is structural; he uses passages of bird song to provide musical associations for the many references to birds, stars, and heaven. For this song, he utilizes the Bar form, AAB, as in the Minnelied and in later German song. The A sections consist of four phrases, each followed by a passage of bird song. Then the A section is repeated, almost verbatim. The B section, again, consisting of four new phrases, has different passages of bird song following each phrase. Thus, the passages of bird song act as a structural device, paradoxically separating and at the same time tying each phrase together.

The second metaphor for the link from heaven to earth is harmonic, since in this song Messiaen's chords are the dissonant enchaining type used in so many instances in this work. Here, the chords become a harmonic litany in the sense of providing different chords for each of the repeated tones of the voice. The change of harmony for the repeated tones prevents complete stagnation from taking over.

The prevailing tonality of the piece is F# major, although the tonal implications in this song are so diverse as to make the chords themselves almost chromatic. The first phrase, "Oiseau d'étoile," is set to the repeated tone C#, which is the fifth scale step in the F# major tonality. After the repeated tones, the phrase falls a minor third to the third of the key. The falling minor third reminds one of the call "Toungou" in Song V, "L'Amour de Piroutcha," and constitutes a kind of "reminiscence motif" from that earlier song. The harmonic litanies for this phrase consist of a dominant seventh chord in the second inversion, followed by, in the left hand, a dissonant cluster chord (including adjacent major and minor seconds) against, in the right hand, a chord with the implications of a raised supertonic in the second inversion. The third chord is a whole tone chord, with its lowest note on A natural. All of these both mildly and more fiercely dissonant chords come to rest on an F# tonic chord with added sixth (Harawi, p. 84, ms. 1-2). The bird song fragment then enters (Harawi, p. 84, ms. 2, end of measure only). The next phrase of melody, instead of being a flat repetition of the first, contains some modifications (Harawi, p. 84, ms. 3-4). The chords underlying the melody are similar, though not identical to those accompanying the first phrase. The same bird song is heard again. A new melodic phrase appears, this time rising to the tonic above (Harawi, p. 84, ms. 5-6). And this new phrase is likewise given a new passage of bird song to vary it (Harawi, p. 84, ms. 6). The A section is rounded out with a melody that the ear cannot ever quite place in a tonal context, since it slips in and out of the key. The ubiquitous tritone appears within the phrase. The chords, too, relate to F# temporarily, dissolve into atonality, and then re-relate as altered chords in the F# tonality (Harawi, p. 85, ms. 1-2). The final passage of bird song is similar to the first two passages.

Instead of the flat repetition of phrases 1 and 2 found in the A section, the B section has four phrases, each distinctively different from the other. The first phrase of B, however, resembles those first two phrases of A in that it follows the tonic chord of F# major. The second is more non-tonal, and contains two tritones within its span. The third returns to the F# tonality, this time adding the sixth scale step, and the last simply takes the first two notes of the second phrase of A, and rocks back and forth on them, finally dropping to a 5-1 cadence. Thick chords, many of them thirteenths (Messiaen's chord of resonance), accompany phrases 1, 2, and 4, with the third phrase being accompanied by simpler chords within the tonality of F# major. Four different bird songs fill the interstices of section B, two of which are like or related to the repeated bird song of section A.

There is one specific rhythmic technique used in this song, that of gradually augmenting the rhythm steadily from note to note throughout a phrase, beginning with an eighth note, proceeding from there to a quarter note, a dotted quarter note, a half note, and ending with a half note tied to an eighth note. The device is used in six of the twelve phrases, all found in section A. Dropping the device in section B sufficiently varies the rhythm to keep the unity from becoming monotony.

The B section is less mechanical rhythmically than the A section. Each phrase is longer, and in addition the practice of augmenting each note is dropped. The rhythm of each phrase is slightly different from every other phrase, but most phrases begin with an eighth note, which is followed by several quarter notes; then, a dotted quarter, falling near the cadence, tends to delay the resolution. All of these systematized but seemingly free phrases a juxtaposed with the total rhythmic freedom of the bird song passages, and the effect of the combination is that of tranquility and transcendence.

XI. "Katchikatchi les Étoiles"

The title for "Katchikatchi les Étoiles" is the result of yet another of Messiaen's borrowings from Peruvian sources. The word "katchikatchi" (Peruvian spelling "kačikačiča"), meaning grasshopper, is found in the second phrase of the dance-song "Mariposača Niñača."[10] For Messiaen, the noun becomes a verb; he writes: "Grasshopper the stars,/ Make them jump,/ Grasshopper the stars,/ Make them dance" ("Katchikatchi les étoiles,/ faites les sauter,/ Katchikatchi les étoiles,/ faites les danser"). Here the composer appears to be describing a cosmic dance where stars, planets, constellations, nebulae, atoms, and electrons leap about the sky in ecstatic movements. Messiaen's entire text is translated as follows:

> Grasshopper the stars,
> make them jump,
> Grasshopper the stars,
> make them dance.
> Grasshopper the atoms,
> make them jump,
> Grasshopper the atoms,
> make them dance.
> Nebulae spiral,
> hands of my hair.
> Electrons, ants, arrows,
> the silence in two.
> Alpha of the Centaur,
> Betelgeuse, Aldebaran,

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[10] D'Harcourt, I, 467.

Expand the space, rainbow
blusterer of time,
Ionized laughter fury of the clock
to the absent murder.
Cut off my head,
its number rolls in blood!
Tou, ahi, mané, mani.

Messiaen's ecstatic cosmic dance as set forth in this poem participates in the archetypal meaning attached to dancing. The meaning of the dance is recognized by Garardus van der Leeuw as "not merely an aesthetic pursuit" but as "the service of the god" and as a source of power: "The rhythm of movement has a compelling force."[11] Thus in the Paradiso of Dante the stars dance.[12] Hence earthly dancing has come to be regarded as an imitation of the heavenly or cosmic model in which "the celestial motion itself has been regarded as a dance."[13] The notion is at least as early as the second-century ceiling painting from Hadrian's villa at Tivoli, where the cosmos is represented by an orb "supported by four Atlantes; near the outer frame, maidens holding ribbons or garlands, dance a round."[14] In Song XI of Messiaen's Harawi, therefore, the lovers from the Tristan myth join in a heavenly dance which is indeed the archetypal pattern itself. This transcendent dance is love and it is power.

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[11] G. van der Leeuw, Religion in Essence and Manifestation, trans. J. E. Turner (New York: Harper and Row, 1963), II, 374.

[12] Paradiso, XXIV, 10-18.

[13] Van der Leeuw, Religion in Essence and Manifestation, II, 375.

[14] Käthi Meyer-Baer, The Music of the Spheres and the Dance of Death (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton Univ. Press, 1963), p. 67.

As van der Leeuw comments, "The cosmic meaning of the dance is not a secondary speculation, but existed from the beginning...." He then quotes some verses by the seventeenth-century German poet, Paul Fleming:

> Lasst uns tanzen, lasst uns springen!
> Denn die Sterne, gleich den Freiern,
> Prangen in die lichten Schleiern.
> Was die lauten Zirkel klingen,
> Darnach tanzen sie am Himmel
> Mit unsäglichem Getümmel.
> (Let us dance, les us spring!/ For the stars,
> like heavenly lovers,/ Glitter through their
> filmy covers./ As the spheres loudly ring,/
> Through the heavens they go spinning/ Without
> end, with beginning.)[15]

In Harawi, the dance becomes all-powerful, dominating the final group of songs in the cycle. Through the alchemy of metaphor, the earthly lovers have now become stars and heavenly lovers.

The dance is associated with divine power. In Indian thought, as Ananda K. Coomaraswamy notes, the dance of the god Shiva has cosmic significance; he quotes from Shaivite literature: "Our Lord is the Dancer, who like the heat latent in firewood, diffuses His power in mind and matter, and makes them dance in their turn."[16] Answering the objection of those who say that Shiva dances "as do those who seek to please the eyes of mortals," Coomaraswamy comments that "in fact He dances to maintain the life of the cosmos and to give release to those who seek Him."[17]

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[15] Gerardus van der Leeuw, Sacred and Profane Beauty, trans. David E. Green (Nashville: Abingdon, 1963), pp. 27-28.

The human dance becomes a kind of microcosmic reflection of the macrocosmic dance of the lord and of the heavens. Thus, as Robert Sherlaw Johnson notes, "In 'Katchikatchi' [the lovers] become the stars and the atoms which jump like grasshoppers."[18] Goléa further presents the provocative suggestion that since the lovers are now no longer mortal man and woman, "all is permitted to them," including the abandon of dancing and leaping.[19] Messiaen's words here describe the spiralling of the nebulae, which are bodies of rarified gas or dust in interstellar space, and the dancing of atoms, which are "the building blocks of all material," as well the leaping of electrons, the lightest of the three constituent parts of the atom and containing a negative charge of electricity.[20]

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[16] Cited in Ananda K. Coomaraswamy, *The Dance of Shiva*, revised ed. (New York: Noonday, 1957), p. 70.

[17] *Ibid.*, p. 75.

[18] Record jacket notes. See also Goléa, *Rencontrez*, p. 169.

[19] *Ibid.*, p. 170.

[20] Robert H. Baker, *Astronomy*, 7th ed. (Princeton, N.J.: Van Nostrand, 1959), p. 345.

The verses become more complex and difficult to explicate after line 10, however. "Mains de mes cheveux" ("hands of my hair") seems violently juxtaposed with the stars, atoms, nebulae, and electrons, but the phrase provides a bridge back to the Penrose painting, with the hands reaching up to the hair. "Ants" ("fourmis") and "arrows" ("flèches") also appear to be strange partners; the "flèches" are readily explainable as the translation into French of the constellation Sagitta (Arrow) or, even more likely, as taken from the constellation Sagittarius, the star-sign under which Messiaen was born.[21] But still puzzling in the context of stars and atoms is "fourmis," though it can be regarded in formalistic terms as a surrealistic reconciliation of opposites or even of impossibles. Or, as in the case of ants crawling out of the hand in Dali and Buñuel's surrealistic film Un Chien Andalou,[22] the presence of the creatures may need no logical justification except as an expression of horror. However, why would such an image be used by Messiaen at this point? Is he simply indulging in free association, since ants, atoms, and electrons are all small entities--and ants also are, like the grasshoppers, insects? Nevertheless, they serve, like the repetition of "Cut off my head," as an indicator of underlying anxiety even here in the depiction of the apotheosis of the lovers.

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[21] Messiaen would seem to be intellectually intrigued by astrology, the ancient unscientific lore which developed either before or concurrently with the scientific study of the skies. He takes a special delight in the fact that his first and undoubtedly best class in composition recognized that he is a Sagittarian and called themselves his "flèches" (Samuel, p. 196). But he does not use astrology as a serious guide to his life, and therefore he finds no real conflict between it and his deep Catholic faith. See Mari, p. 40.

[22] Un Chien Andalou, pp. 96, 109.

The three stars singled out by Messiaen for attention--"Alpha of the Centaur," Betelgeuse, and Aldebaran--are three of the twenty-two brightest stars.[23] Both Betelgeuse and Aldebaran are red stars; Betelgeuse is found near one shoulder of Orion while Aldebaran is the right eye of Taurus, the bull. These two are pictured in the older star maps as adversaries, with Orion brandishing a club and waving a scarf at the bull.[24] "Alpha of the Centaur" is half of a double star (the other half being called Beta) in the constellation which is located in the southern sky between the Southern Cross and Hydra.[25] The use of such information from astronomy seems consistent with Messiaen's interest in sky lore, and it also seems in line with his usual manner of "cannibalizing" all kinds of knowledge, musical as well as non-musical, which he then puts to use in his compositions.

After the joyful mood of the cosmic dance in which the apotheosized lovers participate, the return to the "Ionized laughter fury of the clock" ("Rire ionisé fureur d'horloge")--

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[23] Baker, Astronomy, p. 333.

[24] See the star map dated 1776 in Baker, Astronomy, p. 20. See also ibid., pp. 21, 32.

[25] See the star maps in ibid., pp. 29, 33.

once again the clock as a kind of mad tyrant--and the death-wish of "Coupez ma tête" comes as a shock. Goléa calls it a "terrible invocation."[26] When the head is cut off, its "number" (of which we are never apprised) "rolls in the blood." The regression to a less integrated state seems odd, though Messiaen perhaps is merely entertaining a very "modern" impulse to avoid an idyllic ending by turning away once again from the kind of powerful resolution achieved in the earlier part of Song XI. After the somewhat mystifying mention of the decapitated head whose "number rolls in the blood," there is an interjection of another of Messiaen's excursions into synthetic language--"Tou, ahi! mané, mani." One can only speculate concerning his intentions here. "Tou" appears to be part of "Toungou," the Quechua word for the roulades of the dove; it seems that Messiaen applies his principle of development by elimination even to words as well as to music. "Ahi" is the recurring cry from songs V and VI, and in the latter song it appears as a "forest cry." "Mané" is not a French word at all, but possibly may be the first word (meaning "God hath numbered thy kingdom, and finished it") in the French translation of the words written on the wall for King Nebuchadnezzar: "Mene, tekel, upharsin" (Daniel 5:26). This possible interpretation would take "mané" as a prophecy of doom, perhaps related to the words that speak of the head, whose "number rolls in blood." But "mani," the final word in the poem, is the second word in the famous Tibetan Buddhist mantra: "Om mani padme hum." Here the word "mani" means "locked in the locust."[27] However, in Messiaen's song, the word seems to be used for its sound alone.

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[26] Goléa, Rencontrez, p. 170.

Song XI is thus essentially a depiction of the apotheosis of the lovers in surrealist terms. The stars dance in a cosmic scheme that draws all of life after it in imitation. Isolde and Tristan or Piroutcha and her lover are hence brought to participate in a transcendent model which may be observed by men and women who are yet on earth. Still, the final portion of the poem reflects some anxiety in the reiterated expression of the death-wish and description of the mad clock, with a final line of truncated words and sounds that hint of destruction and nightmare. In the case of "Tou," a syllable has been literally cut off a word that has previously appeared.

The problems Messiaen must solve in this song are largely related to the text. He must find a way to make the music express the idea of stars leaping and dancing. His solution is to use a very high tessitura for the right hand accompaniment and a very low tessitura for the left hand accompaniment, the wide separation suggesting the great height of the stars in comparison to the location of ordinary mortals on earth. The rhythm connected to the two main melodic ideas is jagged and suggests the leaping of of the stars (Harawi, p. 88, ms. 1). These rhythms combine Messiaen's well-known non-retrogradable and added rhythms. Pairs of acciacaturas precede some of the chords, again suggesting a musical equivalent for the leaping stars (Harawi, p. 88, ms. 5).

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[27] For information concerning the Tibetan Buddhist mantra, I am indebted to Dr. Robert Shafer.

At the eleventh song, one would think that Messiaen's musical invention would be running out, and that he might be struggling with the problem of finding new solutions. However, he is able to create yet new melodic materials, having definite affinities with other of his themes but still different from any of the other themes of the previous ten songs. He seems in this song more concerned with unity than in some previous songs, for he gives the piece a remarkable coherence through the utilization of only two themes--a fairly rare economy of Messiaen. As he might say, "C'est si simple" (Song IX); one theme goes up, the other goes down. The melody of the first theme, the ascending one, suggests Mode 4 by means of its intervals of the minor third which outline a diminished triad; in Mode 4, however, the minor thirds combine to outline a diminished seventh. Also, the whole steps which are present, prevent this theme from being truly analyzable as Mode 4. Yet the sound is modal even if the mode is not followed in a doctrinaire fashion (Appendix, example 24.)

The second theme has two versions; sometimes the first interval descending is that of the minor third, and sometimes it is that of the diminished fifth. The second version, possessing the diminished fifth, also descends further following its initial plunge (Appendix, example 25). These two themes (and the variant of the second) provide the basis for the A section; for the B section, only the two versions of the second theme are used.

Messiaen provides a short introduction for the piece, which uses all the thematic material--theme 1 and the two variants of theme 2--as a bare monodic outline in the right hand, countered at the same time by cluster chords made up of two adjacent minor seconds, very low, and also very loud. At the first appearance of the words "Katchikatchi les étoiles," the vocal melody is that of theme 1. The accompaniment, consisting of only the low cluster chords in the left hand and intermittent chords preceded by acciacaturas in the right hand, sounds very spare, especially when compared to many of Messiaen's lush chords used previously in the cycle. For the words "faites les sauter," theme 2 (first version) is used for the vocal melody; the accompaniment is equally as minimal as it was for the first line of verse. "Katchikatchi les étoiles,/ faites les danser" is then set to a repetition of the above, with the exception that the second version of theme 2 is used.

But for "Katchikatchi les atomes/ faites les sauter," the accompaniment is of the type found in Song VII, where the vocal line is underlined by the top note of each of the chords. The chords move in and out of some tentative relationship to the key of E^b major, in spite of the suggested modality of the melody. Leaping chords follow the presentation of the words which describe the way the atoms are made to jump (Harawi, p. 89, ms. 3-5). No new melodic or rhythmic material is presented for the text down to the line "son chiffre roule dans le sang!" Each odd-numbered line is set to one of the two variants of theme 2. Variety is created, however, by the new accompaniments which Messiaen presents for each new image he introduces. For example, leaping thirds, with preceding acciacaturas, make up the accompaniment for "Alpha du Centaure."

At "Bételgeuse, Aldèbaran," the chords become thicker, more dissonant, and leap even more wildly, as is befitting these stars of the first magnitude. Here also Messiaen follows each of the chords from "Katchikatchi les atomes" with the same chord, only transposed down a diminished fifth (Harawi, p. 91, ms. 1-3). "Coupez ma tête" (here, literally, "Cut my head") is set to chords of superpositions in the left hand, and a sequential pattern of leaping intervals consisting of a major third, a diminished fifth, a perfect fourth, another perfect and a minor sixth, in the right hand. For the words "son chiffre roule dans le sang," the left-hand chordal accompaniment rises to meet the various-sized intervals of the right hand; this appears to be a partial "fan-shaped" configuration, with a full "fan" appearing immediately following the completion of the text. This "fan" consists of the left hand parallel ninths rising to meet the descending chords of superposition. These fan-like configurations foreshadow those found in Turangalîla-Symphonie.

There is an interruption, created by the synthetic, almost inarticulate phrase "Tou, ahi, mané, mani." The "ahi" is close to a primitive call or cry, and the accompaniment is a glissando, going from low to high notes on the keyboard and spanning all but thirteen of the 88 keys. "Mané, mani" descends by means of whole and half steps, and then another "Tou, ahi" is heard.

Following the primitive cry, the B section follows, with both words ("roule dans le sang") and music developed by elimination; the result is a truncated verbal and melodic phrase which is repeated four times, with a shimmering accompaniment consisting of thirty-second notes in both hands, in leaping, dissonant intervals. The deep, loud cluster chord heard at the very beginning of the piece returns, and it precedes what is now more of a scream than a cry--"Ahi" on a c''' (the highest note of the cycle); this scream is accompanied by a very dissonant chord, consisting of e^b-a-b^b in the left hand, and c^b-a^b in the right hand, and preceded by an equally dissonant acciacatura "chord." The conclusion of the song is befitting the energy and anxiety generated by the words and music which lead up to the scream.

XII. "Dans le Noir"

Although Messiaen says in his Technique of My Musical Language that he thinks the recapitulation of the sonata form to be now obsolete,[28] yet in the last song of Harawi, "Dans le Noir," we find him making a kind of recapitulation or restatement of the main points--both poetic and musical--raised earlier in the cycle. The melody from the Peruvian song "Delirio," familiar by this time because of its use in Songs II, VII, and IX, now sets the poetic phrase "Dans le noir, colombe verte." It is to be recalled that in Songs II and VII the texts set to the "Delirio" tune were "Bonjour toi, colombe verte" and "Adieu toi, colombe verte." Messiaen here is effecting a type of structural transformation by putting "Dans le noir" in the place of "Bonjour toi" and "Adieu toi."

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[28] Technique of My Musical Language, I, 40.

The poetic text "Dans le noir, mon fruit de ciel, de jour,/ Lointain d'amour" is set to the same retrograde version of the main "Delirio" theme as it has been found in Songs II and VII at the words "toi, de fleur, de fruit, de ciel, de jour,/ Aile d'amour" and again at "Dans ma main mon fruit de ciel, de jour,/ Lointain d'amour" (Song VII). Thus, so far, there has been nothing new added with respect to either words or melody in Song XII.

However, the words "Mon amour, mon souffle" are new to the cycle. Yet the material is not entirely without preparation in previous portions of the cycle, since in Song IV Messiaen had referred to "Arc-en-ciel, mon souffle, mon écho," and in Song V he had said, "Nos souffles, nos souffles, bleu et or." At this point in Song XII the melody is reminiscent also of other of Messiaen's descending lines, found, for example in Song VII

(*Harawi*, p. 49, ms. 14-18) and in Song IX (*Harawi*, p. 74, ms. 6, and p. 75, ms. 1-4). Furthermore, the descending minor thirds in Song XII (*Harawi*, p. 99, ms. 1-3) are reminiscent of the melody for Song V at the words "Toungou, ahi, toungu" (*Harawi*, p. 30, ms. 1-2).

Following this small excursion into slightly different material, Messiaen returns again to familiar ground. At the text "Colombe verte,/ Le chiffre cinq à toi," we find virtually the same melody as in Song VIII, "Syllabes," only here transposed lower to a new tonal center and once more put through the deforming prisms of the composer's mind and his modal system. (At this point, the music is close to that of mode 2.) Interval relationships are altered, but the tune (*Harawi*, p. 99, ms. 5-7) is recognizable as a near-relative to the beginning of Song VIII (*Harawi*, p. 55, ms. 1-3). This tune, as we have already noted, derives from the Peruvian song "Tikata Tarpuinikiču" (Appendix, example 26).

"La violette double, doublera" reappears from Songs I and VIII, this time with the melody from Song VIII but transposed from the G major tonal center to an E^b major tonal center (*Harawi*, p. 99, ms. 9-11; compare with p. 55, ms. 5-7 and p. 3, ms. 2-4). The phrases "Très loin" and "tout bas" are repeated from Song VIII, with the same intervallic relationships of the minor third for "Très loin" and the major sixth for "tout bas," now transposed, as is the rest of the material borrowed from Song VIII.

"Très loin" appears again, now set to the interval of a major sixth, and there are two further appearances of "tout bas," both set to reiterations of the major sixth interval.

The whole piece is tied up neatly with a direct repetition of the very first words of the first song of the cycle "La ville qui dormait...," set to the same rhythmic and tonal pattern, except for its transposition from the G major tonal center of Song I to the E^b major tonal center of Song XII. The last sounds in the song are those of the voice humming the interval of the major sixth (as a final reminder of the "tout bas" idea), followed by a Messiaenic pair of chords, the first made up of a major second and a perfect fourth in the left hand (used as an anticipatory acciaccatura) and the second, of two perfect fifths, played by the right hand.

The only truly new musical material for this final song is found in the accompaniment or in the interludes when the piano is heard without the voice. The new material in the right hand accompaniment descends in enchaining chords at the words "Dans le noir" (Harawi, p. 94, ms. 1-4), while the left hand outlines the familiar chords from the beginning of Songs II (Harawi, p. 4, ms. 1-4) and VII (Harawi, p. 48, ms. 1-4).

The pianistic interludes, which, as noted above, also contain new material, follow each of the three statements of "Dans le noir," with a very long segment of pianistic interlude being placed between the last appearance of "Dans le noir" and the emergence of "Mon amour, mon souffle." These interludes are basically similar to each other, with a constant rhythmic pattern of longer values in the right hand. Each succeeding interlude is longer than the last: the final interlude covers two pages in the printed score. The chords are composed of superpositions in the right hand, and added-tone chords in the left hand. There is no discernible mode and certainly no discernible tonal center. The contrast between the two types of sections--the first with text and centered around an E^b major and modal tonality, and the second without voice, text, or tonal center--seems carefully planned by Messiaen.

If we look at what the structure of the song seems to be, it is not at first apparent how much cohesion and coherence are present. There are the first two A sections, each based on the text "Dans le noir...," and a section I have called C, setting the third appearance of "Dans le noir..." and using the retrograde form of the A sections. Then there are the pianistic sections, labelled B, which follow both the A sections and the C section. The segment based on "Mon amour, mon souffle" can be termed a separate section, D, since it is unlike any other in this song. The "Colombe verte..." can be identified as the E section, while the final "La ville qui dormait..." forms the F section. However, looking more closely at each of these sections, we note that the A sections and also the C, D, E, and F sections have all been derived from Songs I, II, VII, and VIII, while some sections are tangentially related to Song IX. Thus the entire twelfth song can be proven to be a grand recapitulation of musical and poetic elements taken from the entire cycle.

How traditional, then, are Messiaen's ways of creating form? Obviously, there are conventional elements, even though he may disavow the slavish use of them. He simply uses tradition in his own personal manner. His forms are, as we have seen, built in an additive and repetitive way, accumulating and reiterating rather than developing.

In Harawi, the entire cycle of twelve songs functions as a remarkable tour de force (for such it is, lasting over fifty minutes, stretching the physical endurance and mental agility of both performers to the utmost). But also the cycle is an equally remarkable emotional document of Messiaen's own struggles with the problems of love and death, which for him hold the key to the meaning of both life and art. For without love and death, life would be deprived of its two poles, joy and sorrow, and the journey of life would continue on endlessly and pointlessly, with the bearers of life inevitably becoming as world-weary as Jonathan Swift's Struldbrugges.[29]

Obviously, Messiaen, who is no sterile formalist, insists upon connecting life and art. The poetry of the Harawi cycle, subtitled Chant d'Amour et de Mort (Song of Love and Death) carries some of his most deeply felt concerns. Yet to pin down abstract ideas of love and death to musical equivalents is a difficult task for a composer, since music is a non-verbal art. Messiaen effects the "translation" of abstractions into concrete sound by means of his musical language of non-retrogradable rhythms which come to stand for time itself, a kind of Bergsonian durée which is more qualitative and psychological in nature than it is quantitative and chronometric. And the "translation" is also effected by Messiaen's modes of limited transposition, which reflect the boundedness of life as well as the necessity for escape and transcendence.

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[29] Jonathan Swift, Gulliver's Travels, Book III.

The necessity for escape and transcendence is especially shown in the pieces in which Messiaen reiterates an ostinato pattern tirelessly--the technique which Ravel had used in Bolero. Just when the auditor reaches a point where he can bear no further repetitions, Messiaen (like Ravel) presents the solution to the entrapping ostinato. Ravel's solution had been that of escaping to a new key before returning to the home key; Messiaen's solution, as in "Syllabes," is simply to come to a halt, then to insert a quarter note rest, which is followed in turn by a final cadence. These solutions, though different, achieve the same effect, which is to create a kind of suspension of time as long as the pattern is continuing. When the pattern abruptly changes or stops, the demands of temporality are once again asserted. Still, for the space of time in which the work exists, the listener achieves a kind of immortality since temporality is suspended,[30] and also he finds a oneness with his own soul as he ultimately "listens to himself"[31] and to his own thoughts and feelings through Messiaen's music.

Thus in *Harawi* we have seen Messiaen using aspects of the same musical language that he used in his earlier works with religious titles and programmatic captions, and achieving again a sense of transcendence and immortality. What ties *Harawi* to the transcendence of the works with religious titles and themes (especially such works as the *Quartet for the End of Time*) are the bird song interludes, signifying a link between heaven and earth. In *Harawi* immortality in the form of the Angel who announces the end of time and the beginning of eternity is not, of course, present *per se*, but the winged intermediaries, the angel-like birds, are nevertheless there. Also common to the earlier works and the *Harawi* cycle are the enchaining chords which are not chord progressions in the ordinary sense, since they move from chord to chord without truly progressing, again providing a circular link with infinity.

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[30] In discussing the relationship between myth and music, Lévi-Strauss asserts that both myth and music require "a temporal dimension in which to unfold. But this relation to time is of a rather special nature: it is as if music and mythology needed time only in order to deny it. Both, indeed, are instruments for the obliteration of time. Below the level of sounds and rhythms, music acts upon a primitive terrain, which is the physiological time of the listener; this time is irreversible and therefore irredeemably diachronic, yet music transmutes the segment devoted to listening to it into a synchronic totality, enclosed within itself. Because of the internal organization of the musical work, the act of listening to it immobilizes passing time; it catches and enfolds it as one catches and enfolds a cloth flapping in the wind. It follows that by listening to music, and while we are listening to it, we enter into a kind of immortality" (*Raw and the Cooked*, pp. 15-16).

[31] *Ibid.*, p. 17.

But new to the cycle is the unification of physical and spiritual joy not found, for example, either in the *Quartet for the End of Time* or *Chants de Terre et de Ciel*. Also new to Messiaen in this cycle and in the trilogy as a whole is the use of the Tristan myth as armature around which to enwrap the musical material. Furthermore, Messiaen innovatively uses for the first time Peruvian folk material, now wondrously changed by means of the deforming prism of his art. Landmark though *Harawi* is in Messiaen's development as a composer, it does not stop here but looks forward in turn to the other parts of the trilogy--*Turangalîla-Symphonie* and *Cinq Rechants*--as the second and third parts of the three-part drama. Fruit and flower images, begun in *Harawi*, continue in *Turangalîla-Symphonie*, as does the cosmic dance of the lovers. The musical language throughout the Tristan trilogy is consistent with that established in *Harawi*. Messiaen is able to rework the same modes to produce new themes--and he also discovers new permutations of rhythms, especially in *Turangalîla-Symphonie*. Finally, in *Cinq Rechants*, he will come to the encapsulated lovers who find their freedom by flying away; here, however, the French language is no longer able to convey the meanings which he wishes to express, and he lapses for whole phrases into a synthetic language partially made up of Sanskrit syllables. And once again, in the final part of the Tristan trilogy, the tritone is reiterated in new ways to create themes and motifs reminiscent of Harawi without being actually an imitation of anything Messiaen has previously written.

CHAPTER V

TURANGALÎLA-SYMPHONIE, PART I:

FROM PRELUDE TO FULFILLMENT

Turangalîla-Symphonie is the middle work in Messiaen's massive Tristan trilogy, and for this work the composer chooses the instruments of the orchestra, to which a virtuoso piano part is added, rather than the human voice or voices. He calls the work a symphony, although its ten movements make it seem far more elaborate than the traditional four or five movement symphony. Furthermore, none of the ten movements are written in a strict sonata-allegro form. Instead, once the introductory matter is complete, each movement is structured to express the particular ideational content with which Messiaen has invested it. Again Messiaen is engaging in the structural study of myth--the Tristan and Isolde story--in music. Here the story is reduced to what he considers to be its essentials: the emotional and transcendental realities that make the love experience of these lovers at once unique and universal. The experience is sensual, a fact which Messiaen admits within the context of the music and also in his program notes.[1] In this modified symphonic form, the composer has at his disposal a vastly different and more flexible range of tones and colors than in Harawi, which, of course, utilizes only voice and piano. Hence Turangalîla-Symphonie is capable of probing the sensual depth of the love experience in a manner which is more strikingly moving and more accessible to the ordinary listener.

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[1] Although Messiaen has stated in a conversation with Claude Samuel that the love of Tristan and Isolde is a pure one, the music of Turangalîla-Symphonie would seem to involve more than merely love on a spiritual level. See Samuel, p. 23. In comparison with Turangalîla-Symphonie, Wagner's treatment of his two lovers seems both musically and verbally restrained since the two converse at long length, discussing philosophical abstractions both before and during the time they are reclining on the flowery bank. And if we are to take the music drama Tristan und Isolde at face value, the love there is unconsummated.

Messiaen not only exploits the many colors of the orchestra, but he gives to the piano a striking solo role. The passages for the piano stretch the performer to the utmost, being a tour de force of pianistic techniques and utilizing chords, tone clusters, arpeggios, and massive trills consisting of juxtapositions of four-note clusters in the left hand played against four-note clusters in the right hand. Messiaen says, "The piano part is of such importance and its execution demands such extraordinary virtuosity that one might say the Turangalîla-Symphonie is almost a concerto for piano and orchestra."[2]

The piano part has other functions as well. First, it introduces again the bird song elements, familiar to us from Harawi. Within the framework of the symphony, however, these cannot be unbarred, and thus they unfortunately lack a degree of the freedom possessed by Messiaen's bird song passages elsewhere. Second, the piano is combined with the celesta, glockenspiel, and vibraphone to produce the effect of a Balinese gamelan. This borrowing of the effect of the gamelan does not involve slavish copying of the Balinese music, in which the gender and gangsa, metallic keyboard instruments struck with mallets, are tuned differently from one another. As William P. Malm notes, "When the two groups [of instruments in the Balinese gamelan] are played together they create a shimmering throb because of the beats caused by their tuning differences."[3] Messiaen, however, achieves the desired effect which resembles gamelan tuning by means of clashing minor seconds in his harmony rather than by the actual use of microtones. Also, while gongs, cymbals, and drums are normally part of the Balinese gamelan, Messiaen does not include these in his own gamelan. Finally, while Messiaen seems to be thinking of some of the colors of the Balinese gamelan, he is also very much aware of the principle of interlocking parts which characterizes the music.[4]

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[2] Messiaen's record jacket notes for Turangalîla-Symphonie. Oddly, Messiaen elsewhere has said that he "does not believe in the concerto form," which he thinks is boring--a form that only the greatest masters such as Mozart are capable of handling (Samuel, p. 135).

Messiaen's use of the piano in solo as well as concerted passages is in line with his avowed affection for that instrument. He believes that it is "devoid of color," but it is that quality which is its particular virtue since it thus can take on the colors desired by the executant.[5] In most performances of the

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[3] William P. Malm, Music Cultures of the Pacific, the Near East, and Asia (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1967), p. 33.

[4] See Malm, p. 33.

[5] Samuel, p. 56.

Turangalîla-Symphonie, the soloist has been Yvonne Loriod, who is now the composer's wife. He says that not only in Yvonne Loriod has he found the perfect person to perform his works, but that her capabilities at the keyboard helped him to shape his writing for the piano.[6]

In *Turangalîla-Symphonie*, another instrument, the Ondes Martenot, provides some striking solo passages. This sweetly high-pitched electronic instrument, invented by Maurice Martenot, carries the important theme of love in the symphony, and its sound is unearthly and even mystical. Not only does the instrument itself have an ethereal sound, but the theme is played so slowly as to remind us of the long drawn-out themes in the religious works of Messiaen's earlier periods. In these early works, he attempted to transcend the merely earthly and temporal life. Yet the slow, sweet theme not only looks backward to Messiaen's early works, but also looks forward to the equally timeless mood projected in such a work as *Et Expecto Resurrectionem Mortuorum* (1965).

The remainder of the instrumentation involves instruments grouped according to color--strings, woodwinds, brass, and percussion--but even here Messiaen imprints his own special stamp on the groups. For example, the woodwinds are grouped in specific ways: one piccolo and three flutes; two oboes and English horn; two clarinets and bass clarinet; and three bassoons. In the brass group, there are, as the composer notes, "many trumpets," among them the small trumpet in D, which is used in baroque music. There are also a cornet, eight French horns, three trombones, and a tuba.

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[6] Mari, p. 36; Samuel, p. 130.

The string group is also large so as not to be engulfed by the massive sounds of the other sections. There is a wide variety of exotic percussion instruments: triangle, temple blocks, wood blocks, various cymbals (including the small Turkish cymbals), drums, tambourine, and bells. We have already noted the unique use of the keyboard instruments, glockenspiel, celesta, vibraphone, and piano to create what Messiaen calls a *gamelan*. All of these opposing and combining forces, in large numbers, suggest that Messiaen's vision is now expanding to the point where he requires more sound to express his subject matter.

Needless to say, the treatment of the massive amounts of musical material in this composition will of necessity involve analysis which is somewhat less detailed than in the handling of *Harawi* in Chapters II-Iv above. The aim will be to set forth the outlines of Messiaen's musical structure in the symphony, especially as it relates to his presentation of the Tristan story in his music. The methodology, which will continue to be eclectic, will encompass both analytic and descriptive techniques.

Messiaen's point of departure in *Turangalîla-Symphonie* is expressed in his title, which he borrows from the term Çarngadeva used to describe one of his 120 talas.[7] The term is made up of two Sanskrit words, *turanga* and *lîla*. As his title suggests, Messiaen here is using musical ideas and other material from Eastern music and Hindu thought somewhat as he had used Peruvian material in *Harawi*. In the important program notes which he has written for the symphony, he writes:

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[7] Grosset, p. 302.

> *Lîla* literally means play, but play in the sense of divine action on the cosmos, the play of creation, of destruction and reconstruction, the play of life and death. *Lîla* is also Love. *Turanga* is Time, the time which runs like a galloping horse, time which slips like sand through the hourglass. Turanga is movement and rhythm. *Turangalîla* then signifies, at one and the same time, a love song, a hymn to joy, time, movement, rhythm, life and death.[8]

Hence Messiaen's explanation of *lîla* seems to be congruent with the Indian Shaivite explanation of the meaning of the cosmic dance of the Lord Shiva. According to Coomaraswamy, the dance represents the Lord Shiva's five activities, which include creation and destruction as well as preservation, embodiment, and salvation.[9] And for the Vedanta school, "the motive of creation was explained...as the 'sport' (*lîla*) of the World Soul, and the creation of the cosmos was thought of as the analogy of the production of a work of art."[10] Thus Messiaen uses the cosmic dance not only as a symbol of the lovers' transcending "frenetic dance of joy," but also as a symbol for his life as creator and for the *Turangalîla-Symphonie* as a whole.

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[8] Messiaen's record jacket notes for *Turangalîla-Symphonie*.

[9] Ananda K. Coomaraswamy, *The Dance of Shiva*, revised ed. (New York: Noonday, 1957), p. 70.

Of course, for Messiaen *lîla* is not just the cosmic dance in any mechanical sense, for it is given its energy by love. As Messiaen says, "*Lîla* is also Love." By this statement, he shows his awareness of another important aspect of Hindu thought which is normally expressed through the myth of Krishna and the *gopīs* or cow girls. The story is that as the lad Krishna was playing the flute, he attracted a number of *gopīs*. He at first reproaches them for neglecting their work and their husbands, but then he smiles at them and invites them to dance. This famous and erotic dance is known as *Krishna-lîla*.[11] From among the dancing *gopīs*, the god then chooses one, whose name is Rādhā, and takes her away. Later she will be his favorite. Her place in Indian mythology is explained as follows by two modern scholars:

> She is the beloved favorite of Krishna who has known him since childhood.... Rādhā has always been the beloved of Krishna (in all their previous existences); they are really

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[10] A. L. Basham, *The Wonder That Was India* (1954; rpt. New York: Grove Press, 1959), p. 322.

[11] S. M. Pandey and Norman Zide, "Surdas and His Krishna-*Bhakti*," in *Krishna: Myths, Rites, and Attitudes*, ed. Milton Singer (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1966), p. 191.

> the same--the difference between them is only verbal, and Krishna created Rādhā for *lîla*.[12]

Lîla--dance, love, delight--is hence central to Messiaen's analysis of a love which brings lovers together and unites them.

But equally as important for Messiaen as the concept of *lîla* is *turanga*, which is time, movement, rhythm. We have already noted how much the composer seems to be in revolt against modern pressures of chronological time and how he seems to be seeking for an eternal, timeless state. Thus his references to "the time which runs like a galloping horse" and "time which slips like sand through the hourglass" seem to be a recognition of the tyranny of time to which he will not submit. Time may run or even fly, but it is possible through music to descend into an interior timelessness.

The way in which Messiaen descends to interior timelessness is through elaborate playing with time and duration. In the first movement of *Turangalîla-Symphonie*, he provides an extended rhythmic pattern in the strings, which is run through thirteen times, while in the other four groups of instruments four other rhythmic patterns are being presented. The constancy of one pattern and its pull-and-tug on the other patterns are scarcely audible to the listener's ear; the auditor receives the impression that there is no beat, no time at all, only the natural pulsation of heart-beat and slow breathing. Far removed from Western life which is oriented to the clock, Messiaen hence turns to the Indian *talas* systematized by the theorist Çarngadeva. In *Turangalîla-Symphonie*, he especially uses the ragavardhana rhythm,[13] which, like his non-retrogradable rhythms, is the same whether it is used in direct or retrograde fashion.

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[12] *Ibid.*, p. 187.

The cosmic dance, the play of creation, love, time, and movement are all important components of this symphony. But underlying it all is the medieval love story which Wagner made "modern" in his own time, and which Messiaen has chosen as the mythic armature about which *Turangalîla-Symphonie*, like *Harawi* and *Cinq Rechants*, is fashioned. In the crucial fifth movement, Messiaen says that he is providing a musical equivalent for Tristan's words to Isolde: "If the whole world were here with us, I would not see anyone but you." However, since these exact words appear nowhere in Wagner's libretto, Messiaen must be speaking figuratively of the passage in which Tristan and Isolde say:

> O sink hernieder,
> Nacht der Liebe,
> gib Vergessen,
> dass ich lebe;
> nimm mich auf
> in deinen Schoss.
> löse von

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[13] Grosset, p. 303.

der Welt mich los![14]

In the sixth movement, *Jardin du sommeil d'amour*, the garden that surrounds them is Tristan, and it is Isolde as well. In the eighth movement, Tristan and Isolde are "transcended by Tristan-Isolde."[15] The garden of love's sleep reminds us of the flowery bank on which the lovers sink down in Wagner's music drama and also of the fruit and flower imagery of Bosch's painting *The Garden of Earthly Delights*.

The love potion, though not expressly represented in any of the themes of the symphony, is referred to when Messiaen indicates that the love expressed in *Turangalîla-Symphonie* as in the other two parts of the trilogy is "a fatal, irresistible love, which transcends everything outside itself, a love such as is symbolized by the love potion of Tristan and Isolde."[16] Hence for him the love potion is a symbol of the couple's love, but is not a cause of that love. In the nineteenth century, Wagner's use of the love potion was the topic of considerable discussion by music critics, including Ludwig Ehlert, Hans Hopfen, and the eminent Eduard Hanslick, as noted above.[17] Ehlert particularly insisted that the love potion, since it robbed the lovers of their free will, removed motivation from the drama and made it into something undramatic. Hanslick further claimed that if it is only symbolic, as some defenders of Wagner wished it to be, then it is, in Hanslick's opinion, superfluous. Hopfen's viewpoint was that, rather than being either symbolic or superfluous, "the confusion of two different drinks is actually a subject for comedy."[18] As a man with considerably more respect for myth than the nineteenth-century critics, Messiaen is not afraid to revive the love potion, which for him could never be construed as comic. It is symbolic, but not superfluous, since it constitutes a significant element in his symphony. The love potion is tied to the tritonal interval in Songs VII and IX of Harawi, and also will appear in the fifth rechant of Cinq Rechants. In Turangalîla-Symphonie, both the tritone and the idea of the love potion are ever present, though a linkage between them cannot at all times be assumed.

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[14] Wagner, *Tristan und Isolde*, ed. Robb, p. 80.

[15] Messiaen's record jacket notes for *Turangalîla-Symphonie*.

[16] *Ibid*.

[17] See above, Chapter III.

In Wagner's opera as in the Celtic, Germanic, and French sources for the Tristan story, the beautiful Isolde is the one who, along with her mother, has healed Tristan of the near-fatal wound he received in fighting the Morolt.[19] Following the mortal blow given by Melot after the discovery of the lovers by Mark and his men, the hero has gone to his father's castle in Brittany, in the hope that he may recover from the wound. While Tristan sleeps, Kurvenal sadly watches and comments on the ability of Isolde to cure wounds:

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[18] Hanslick, p. 217.

[19] In Wagner's version, the Morolt is Isolde's fiance, while in the medieval sources he is her maternal uncle.

> Erwachte er,
> wär's doch nur,
> um für immer zu verscheiden:
> erschien zuvor
> *die Ärztin* nicht,
> die einz'ge, die uns hilft.[20]

For Messiaen, the roles of healer as exemplified in Isolde and of magician are linked. As he notes, his heroine, "like Vivian, beloved of Merlin and the sorcerer, like Isolde the beautiful, skilled in love potions, like Ligeia of Edgar Allan Poe, dominating death...is something of a magician: 'Her eyes travel ...in the past...in the future'."[21] Strangely, these heroines are not completely wholesome, helpful, or always healing. Isolde becomes an unlucky love for Tristan; Vivian, who is called Nimue by Malory and Nimiane in earlier versions,[22] imprisons Merlin under a rock; Ligeia, in Poe's eerie story of the same name, returns from the dead to rob the narrator's second wife of her life. Thus, although the *bien aimée* "of water, of heaven, of time" in *Harawi* was able to mitigate the psychic wounds mentioned in the poems of the vocal cycle, there remains more than a trace of the problematical in the characteristics attributed to the heroine of the *Turangalîla-Symphonie*: she is at once wonderful and terrible. We have noted in the poems set in *Poèmes pour Mi* and *Chants de Terre et de Ciel* that physical relationships had seemed a source of terror for Messiaen. This earlier terror continues to crop up in *Turangalîla-Symphonie* in connection with the story of Isolde, the heroine.

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[20] Wagner, *Tristan und Isolde*, ed. Robb, p. 106; italics mine.

[21] Messiaen's record jacket notes for *Turangalîla-Symphonie*.

[22] Roger Sherman Loomis, *The Development of Arthurian Romance* (1963; rpt. New York: W.W. Norton, 1970), pp. 129-30.

In addition to the Wagner opera, Poe's "Ligeia," and the Arthurian legend, there are several other literary and artistic works which Messiaen cites as influencing the imagery and symbolism of the symphony. The literary influences include the lovers in Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*; a poem, "L'Union Libre" (1931), by the surrealist poet André Breton; another short story by Poe, "The Pit and the Pendulum"; and the short story "Venus d'Ille" by Prosper Mérimée. The composer also refers to the paintings of Chagall in which the artist portrays either the wife flying down to meet the husband or both lovers flying off into space, and also the work of Bosch, particularly *The Garden of Earthly Delights*. In *Cinq Rechants*, the influence of Bosch's work will again appear in the form of the striking image of the lovers encapsulated in the crystal ball--a detail from the centerpiece of Bosch's famous triptych.

These manifold references to literary works and paintings, though rich in implication as programmatic sources for Messiaen's work, do create two problems for the composer: (1) how is it possible to create a work which, though diverse in sources, is yet characterized by wholeness and coherence? His solutions for these problems obviously will be different from his solutions in the twelve songs of Harawi, since there he could rely on the language of poetry to link his music at all times with the meaning he wished to express. His approach in the symphony is to take a number of themes, which are melodic, harmonic, and rhythmic in nature; those then become the objective correlatives for his thoughts and feelings, and also become attached to the literary and pictorial references described in his program notes. The notes hence become valuable evidence which shows how the music relates to the mythic armature and how his musical material is wrapped around it. In the symphony, Messiaen achieves new dimensions, for it is like a sculpture of gigantic proportions, perhaps reminiscent of one of the larger sculptures of Henry Moore. There is greater length, since the symphony takes approximately seventy minutes to perform, in contrast with the fifty minutes of the song cycle Harawi. And there is a new emphasis on development by means of extension rather than by elimination, the latter a technique much used in Harawi. As in Harawi, the familiar enchaining chords are present, now carried to new lengths. Finally, there is a new energy, particularly in the fifth movement of the symphony, and it is an energy that builds up a momentum unusual for Messiaen.

For his treatment of the Tristan and Isolde story in the symphony, the composer chooses the following themes: (1) the "statue" theme; (2) the "flower" theme; (3) the theme of love; and (4) the theme which is simply a chord progression. There is also a pair of ascending and descending scale passages, proceeding in contrary motion from one another, known as "the fan." These themes are carefully listed in the "thematic catalogue" provided by Messiaen in his program notes. In the "statue" theme, he wants the listener to be reminded of "the heavy, terrifying brutality of old Mexican monuments," but more especially of the previously mentioned Venus d'Ille of the Prosper Mérimée story.[23] In that story, an ancient Roman statue, presumably representing the goddess Venus, is found; the finder's son, who plans to be married that afternoon, carelessly places the wedding ring on the statue's finger while he plays a game of tennis. He forgets the ring on the statue's finger, and thus is forced to improvise for a ring during the wedding ceremony. Later that night, the bridegroom goes to retrieve his original ring. To his horror, he finds that the statue has clenched her fist and will not relinquish the ring. The next morning the bridegroom is found dead, crushed and with horrible wounds about his body. His bride, half-mad with fright, relates the events of the previous night as she recalls them. She had gone up to her room to await her husband. She felt a heavy weight sink down in bed beside her, and then she heard her husband come into the room and also enter the bed. The story continues:

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[23] Messiaen's record jacket notes for Turangalîla-Symphonie.

> She heard a stifled cry. The person who was in bed beside her sat up, and seemed to stretch out both arms in front. Then she turned her head... and saw, so she says, her husband on his knees by the bed, with his head on a level with the pillow, in the arms of a sort of greenish giant who was embracing him with all its might.... She said that she recognized...can you guess? The bronze Venus, Monsieur de Peyrehorades' statue....[24]

The girl loses consciousness at this point. When she awakes, her eyes meet the statue, "motionless, its legs and the lower half of its body on the bed, the bust and arms stretched out before it, and in its arms her lifeless husband."[25] Thus the theme of the statue in Turangalîla-Symphonie is laden with connotations of fear, awfulness, and dread--feelings previously noted on connection with Song II and portions of Song IX of Harawi. For Messiaen, the statue theme is not only appropriate in connection with the love-death motif implicit in the Tristan story, but it functions as a figure of conscience standing over the lover.

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[24] Prosper Mérimée, The Venus of Ille and Other Stories, trans. Jean Kimber (London: Oxford Univ. Press, 1966), pp. 29-30.

[25] Ibid., p. 30.

To convey the idea of the terrifying statue, Messiaen chooses a sequence of six major and minor thirds, doubled and usually, as he notes, played by trombones. The theme is normally played *fortissimo*, and consists of major and minor thirds which pass through various key centers. The thirds are as follows: a major third built on G^b, a major third built on C^b, a minor third built on B♮, a minor third built on A#, a major third on C♮ and a return to the first major third on G^b. Here the trombones are joined by the tuba (Appendix, example 27.) They remind one of the two chords, one based on an A^b major seventh and the other based on a dominant seventh in G major, which are played in quick succession to mark the beginning of the Coronation Scene in Mussorgsky's *Boris Godunov* (Appendix, example 28). The apparent echo from the opera *Boris Godunov* is fitting, not only because of the musical similarities or even because of Messiaen's long partiality to opera, but also because the character of Boris is conscience-ridden and unhappy. Also, the statue theme in *Turangalîla-Symphonie* recalls yet another statue which is connected with conscience: even though the chords in the passage dealing with the Commendatore's returning to take Don Giovanni to hell in Mozart's *Don Giovanni* are much more stationary than these, the feeling of terror is still congruent with the effect that Messiaen desires his own "statue" theme to have.

This heavy theme is contrasted with the airy lightness of the "flower" theme; here Messiaen says that he is especially thinking of "the tender orchid, the decorative fuchsia, the red gladiolus, the pliant corn lily."[26] It might be noted here that each of these flowers is either of the violet-red, blue, or red colors which the composer lists as his favorites. We recall his frequent references to the beloved in Harawi as being "of fruit" and "of flower," especially in Song VII, "Adieu toi." For Messiaen, then, the "flower" theme is connected inextricably to the beloved, and gives to the beloved all the qualities of fruitfulness, beauty, and decorativeness. Further, it is known that he prefers nature and natural things to the artificiality of modern civilization; hence, while the "statue" theme is terrifying in its presentation of an object made by man, the "flower" theme which reasserts nature has connotations that are positive and also pleasant. Musically, this theme is composed of two melodic lines which move in opposite directions, the upper voice moving downward by means of step and leap, and the lower voice moving generally upward also by step and leap. The "flower" theme is one of great sweetness and simplicity; it is first played by English horn and clarinets so softly as to sound muted (Appendix, example 29). The theme is repeated by the clarinets, then taken up by flute and bassoon, played very softly. The composer compares the two melodic lines to two "eyes," important images in his poetry, especially in Song I of Harawi where the lovers' glances are as if knit together

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[26] Messiaen's record jacket notes for Turangalîla-Symphonie. The corn lily in France is the wild gladiolus and is red.

("sans denouer regards, toi").

The theme of love, although not described in any detail by Messiaen, is said by him to be "the most important of all."[27] In a trilogy devoted to the Tristan story, one would expect the theme of love to have a prime place and to carry some of the composer's most profound musical thoughts. However, the theme itself is not very complex. It weaves in and out of the tonality, sometimes touching on scalar degrees related to the tonal center; the strings provide a constant F# major tonal background. As stated above, the theme is played slowly and thus gives the effect of being drawn out interminably. It has an ethereal calm because of its unhurried tempo and the lack of jagged rhythms. The Ondes Martenot, with its "expressive and high-pitched voice," according to Messiaen, is chosen to carry the theme.[28] The theme has two forms, a more sinuous form and a more straightforward one (Appendix, example 30). There are ingenious variants of both forms of the theme which appear throughout the symphony.

The final theme is not a single theme but several emanations of chords--sometimes enchaining, sometimes descending or ascending--and they may be tossed off lightly or given heavy, ponderous treatment. They appear most prominently in the eighth movement the piano solo (Appendix, example 31). Messiaen associates their shifting shapes with the adjurations of the alchemists to the magical substances with which they were working: "dissociate and coagulate." The concepts of coagulation and disintegration are part of the ancient lore of alchemy, in which the substances of sulphur and mercury were used to represent "the two basic generative forces."[29] Sulphur stands for Sun-King-Man, while mercury, known also as quicksilver, stands for Moon-Queen-Women. "Alchemy," writes a recent student of the subject, "is based on the view that man, as a result of the loss of his original 'Adamic' state, is divided within himself. He regains his integral nature only when the two powers, whose discord has rendered him impotent, are again reconciled with one another."[30] Hence the aim of alchemy is to integrate masculine with feminine forces. Symbolically this takes place in the chemical marriage of suphur and mercury in the alchemical retort. They there come together and coagulate, the two elements becoming one compound. An ancient poem by an alchemical writer, Merculinus, describes the process of the masculine and feminine conjunction:

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[27] Messiaen's record jacket notes for Turangalîla-Symphonie.

[28] Ibid.

> White-skinned lady, lovingly joined to her ruddy-limbed husband,
> Wrapped in each other's arms in the bliss of connubial union,
> Merge and dissolve as they come to the goal of perfection:
> They that were two are made one, as though of one body.[31]

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[29] Titus Burckhardt, Alchemy, trans. William Stoddart (Baltimore: Penguin, 1971), p. 139.

[30] Ibid., p. 149.

[31] Quoted in C. G. Jung, The Psychology of the Transference, trans. R. F. C. Hull (Princeton: Princeton Univ. Press, 1969), p. 85.

Messiaen's own creative method seems in line with alchemical processes since he takes such disparate elements to forge them together in his art. Furthermore, the conjunction of man and woman within a mystical experience is the subject of the symphony.

Messiaen weaves statue, flower, love, and the chordal themes together with the ingenious use of Indian rhythms as well as even more intricate permutations of various rhythmic patterns. For each movement, the composer chooses one or more of the themes to bear the ideational content, and he juxtaposes the themes skillfully with episodic material that prepares the way for the theme. His own poetic titles for the movements and his program notes not only explicate the movements, but also show the mythic design around which the musical material is wound as if around the armature of a piece of additive sculpture.

The structure of the entire symphony appears to me to fall neatly into a two-part division, with the first five movements making up one unit and the last five movements making up another. The first four movements provide a formalistic prelude to the fifth, which is a climactic point for the entire symphony. "Introduction," the first movement, juxtaposes the statue and flower themes, and this juxtaposition is further evidence of Messiaen's recognition that terror and beauty often appear side by side in life. The flower theme is heard in the second movement, and both flower and statue are heard in the fourth movement. The third emphasizes rhythmic interest more than it utilizes cyclic themes.

The fifth movement, which closes the first half of the symphony, symbolizes the ecstatic central event of the love of the two lovers as well as their transcendence over time and earthly life.

The final five movements deal with the fulfillment of love. These do not, however, outline a straightforward line of progress upward; after the beautiful "Garden of Love's Sleep" (Movement VI), there is yet the terrifying seventh movement which Messiaen has associated with Poe's eerie story, "The Pit and the Pendulum." The eighth movement, "Development of Love," also utilizes the statue theme and therefore is not completely removed from the element of terror. By the ninth movement, the terror has become exorcized, and the tenth movement returns to the ecstasy of the fifth movement.

I. "INTRODUCTION"

The shape of the first movement is binary; there is an exposition of the first two main themes, statue and flower, and following the exposition there is a second section which is the body of the movement. One might say that the structure consists of exposition and development if it were not for the fact that the two themes are not developed during the body of the movement. Instead, Messiaen's rhythmic ingenuity comes to the fore during this second section of the movement, with a brilliant display of five independent rhythmic schemes. Between the two sections is a solo cadenza, characterized by arpeggios, thick chords, acciaccaturas, runs, and trills, for the piano.

The first movement begins with what Leonard Burkat calls "a commanding figure chiefly low in the strings."[32] This consists of leaping sixteenth notes in a mode approaching Messiaen's Mode 4. It is necessary to say that it only *approaches* the mode since it has the interval of the minor third only once instead of twice as in the true fourth mode. There is no harmonic structure here, but rather the melody is given parallel octaves which strengthen the sound without adding thickness. The melody settles on a B^b, reiterating that tone for nine sixteenth notes. Then a resounding tam-tam crash is heard, followed by what Burkat calls "a quick call"[33] outlined in secondal harmony. A descending whole tone scale, paralleled by tritones in the piano, perfect fifths in the oboes, and major sixths in the clarinets, is part of the preparation for the statue theme. But before the statue theme can appear, there is a glissando by the strings and the Ondes Martenot,[34] followed by the opening of the massive trill, previously mentioned, in the piano. The trill is as follows: in the right hand are the notes C♮- D♮- F♮-G♮, and in the left hand C#-D#-F#-G#. It is produced by alternating the two hands rapidly.

At this point the statue theme enters, with its connotations of terror, especially in connection with the Venus d'Ille of the

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[32] Burkat, p. 260.

[33] *Ibid.*, p. 260.

[34] This *glissando* is called "a shriek" by Burkat, p. 260.

Mérimée story. This theme, as noted above, is very loud and is played in the deep registers of the trombones and tuba. As noted above, it consists of major and minor thirds, passing through various key centers. The statue appears again three times, with its second and third appearances being lengthened and its fourth appearance being truncated.

Now the grimness of the foregoing pasages will be alleviated, for Messiaen follows the statue with brilliant "jumbles of sounds," chromatics in groups of ten and twelve notes in a section marked Bien modéré (Turangalîla-Symphonie, p. 6, ms. 1-2, piano only). This modulates into the Presque vif section, in which the piano begins very high (g#''') and descends by half steps, one finger of the left hand hitting next to one finger of the right hand all the way down the keyboard in thirty-second notes. The other instruments pursue independent paths until the piano reaches E; then they join the piano in its downward descent. The flutes, oboes, English horn, clarinets, and strings all descend in sixteenth notes, half the rate of the piano's descent, and by means of alternating whole or half steps (Mode 2). When the piano reaches its nadir, another dramatic descent, by tritone and perfect fourths, is begun on high by the winds and strings. At the marking Presque lent, two dissonant chords, F-G#-D-A and B-G-B^b (the latter chord having shadows of both B major and B^b major), rock back and forth until the phrase comes to rest on a E^b-F#-B-F chord. It may not be inappropriate to comment that these chords remind one of Stravinsky's constructions. Then the delicate flower theme is heard, twice in the clarinets and a third time in the flutes. The theme consists of the following vertical intervals: g-d#'' (a flatted thirteenth), a-c#'' (a tenth), c'-d' (major second), ending on e^{b}'-f#' (a minor third). With its shifting tonal centers (it has implications of c minor, A major, C major, and possibly e^{b} minor), it can easily represent the varied colors of the flowers Messiaen mentions. The piano, vibraphone, and celesta break into the hushed atmosphere with softly chiming chords consisting of two minor seconds clustered at the top separated by an augmented fifth and completed by another minor second at the bottom.

At *Presque vif*, the piano foreshadows its own brilliant cadenza with a fast *forte* passage of intervals with shifting tonal centers; the piano breaks off at the point where each of the trumpets in turn begins to repeat a c♮' in two groups of six sixteenth notes. Each trumpet decrescendos as the next trumpet picks up the same pattern. This makes an effective lead-in to the piano cadenza.

The cadenza is made up of one pattern after another. It begins with a linear pattern of thirty-second notes in the right hand: E^{b}, the interval of C-d, F#, and G#. This pattern is played against a pattern in the left hand which is staggered two notes ahead of the other to create an autonomous yet coinciding sonority. The left-hand pattern consists of a thirty-second note rest, followed by G♮, A♮, B♮. There is no discernible mode. The next pattern, introduced in the right hand, consists of eight thirty-second notes, repeated three times. These eight notes are d#''', c#''', a#'', g#'', d♮'', and they are played against an ostinato pattern of e♮'' to a♮'', b♮' to f♮' in the left hand. Again, there is no discernible mode. Messiaen now drops the patterns of eight thirty-second notes in favor of patterns of four thirty-second notes, outlining the broken chords of D#-C#-A#-G#, a dominant seventh in C major, and an added sixth on C in the third inversion. The latter two broken chords are repeated nine times with an accompaniment in the left hand which rocks back and forth on the tones A# to D#, G# to C# in sixteenth notes, twice the value of the notes of the upper hand. The broken chords are in Mode 7. Messiaen breaks out of these patterns with two acciaccatura groups which sound like polytonal broken chords, one juxtaposing the tonal centers of C# major and F major, and the other juxtaposing the tonal centers of F# major and C major. Although the composer in his theoretical works insists that the term *polytonality* does not adequately describe his harmonic practice, nevertheless he admits that music can be in "the atmosphere of several tonalities at once"; he notes, furthermore, that "by polymodality...we superpose our modes, and there again, we are present at the hatching of polytonal aggregations."[35] Hence we may for convenience use the terms *polytonal* and polytonality wherever these seem to apply.

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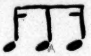
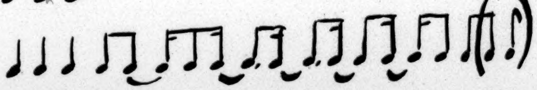
[35] *Technique of My Musical Language*, I, 67.

The piano cadenza begins to work its way to a close with staccato enchaining chords which descend in sixteenth note triplets, followed by punctuating chords: an augmented ninth on F#, a bitonal chord consisting of a B^b major triad and a dominant seventh in A major, a chord made up of two fifths (the A^b-E^b perfect fifth plus the B♮-F♮ diminished fifth), ending on a chord made up of two superimposed intervals, a major sixth from F to D and a perfect fifth from E to B. Another downward arpeggio begins as an outline of a D^b major chord but finishes with the nonharmonic tones of E^b, B^b, E♮, and D#. Three chords of superposition lead to another pattern; here, the right hand consists of groups of four thirty-second notes which follow each other up the keyboard--F_1, A_1, C_1, D_1, and back to C, D, G, A, and so on up to the A just below the highest C (c''''') on the keyboard. The left hand consists of sixteenth notes in triplets (against the four thirty-seconds in the right hand) and in the format of ascending perfect fiths. Another of the massive quadruple trills is heard, and there is another swoop downward to very low, slow, heavy-sounding chromatics which lead directly to the body of the movement. The piano cadenza is much more tightly patterned than the wild, free passages of bird song heard in Harawi.

The body of the movement consists of several rhythmic schemes, played off against one another--and at the same time, with each other. The gamelan has an ostinato rhythm which is generally duple, but by virtue of a short harmonic ostinato the duple rhythm is perceived as a 5/8 rhythmic overlay (*Turangalîla-Symphonie*, p. 16, ms. 1-4, "gamelan" group). The flutes, bassoons, cellos, and basses reinforce the basic duple rhythm.

The strings have their own rhythmic scheme, based on the retrograde *ragavardhana* rhythm:

Ragavardhana: 

String scheme: 

David Drew has observed that there are twelve factors in this rhythmic "row," and that each factor can be perceived as being made up of two or more sixteenth-note units. Thus the same rhythmic row can be given the numerical value of 4 4 4 2 3 2 4 4 4 2 3 2 (4). (The value within parentheses is a repetition of the 4 at the beginning of the row.) Messiaen makes a kind of "carillon" out of these by using thirteen chords for the twelve factors and, as Drew explains, "This ensures that the rhythm is advanced by one factor at each repetition of the carillon."[36] Since the scheme is always advancing, the new beginning of the scheme will always fall on a different part of the 4/4 measure than was the case at the beginning of its last appearance. This kind of staggering or shifting of accents and chords is perceived aurally as a kind of "ebb and flow" against the duple ostinati and 5/8 overlay of the gamelan.

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[36] Drew, pt. III, p. 51.

As might be expected, the woodwinds proceed according to their own independent scheme, and their movement is in phase with the strings (Turangalîla-Symphonie, p. 16, ms. 1-4, strings and woodwinds). The cymbal part is extremely complicated and rich, since each value either is diminishing from seventeen units (again the sixteenth note is the basic unit) down to seven, or is in the process of growing back up to seventeen time units[37] (Turangalîla-Symphonie, p. 16, ms. 1-4, and p. 17, ms. 1-4, cymbal). The snare drum can also be schematized according to units. It begins as a pattern of 2 1 1 1 2 3 2 1 1 1 2 4. At each repetition, the pattern is added to but not in an arithmetic or geometric progression.

These schemes, each operating at different rates of speed while covering the same distance of the body of the work different numbers of times (for example, the strings complete their scheme thirteen and one-half times, while the cymbal goes through its scheme four and one-fifth times), weave in and out like iridescent threads in a medieval tapestry.

In addition to these schemes, there is an interlude in which the piano and brass play alternately; the first part of the interlude consists of piano alone, reiterating a chord which appears to be a biplanal chord, having a C major triad in the right hand and a dominant seventh chord (spelled enharmonically) in the second inversion built on A^b in the left hand. However, when seen in the context of the second part of the interlude, which has the brass taking this chord and descending from it by the arrangement of half and whole steps found in Mode 3, the biplanal chord emerges as one of a series of chords in Mode 3. The chords descend contiguously, almost as closely linked as the enchaining chords Messiaen used in Harawi to such a great extent. The links are more evident when it is noted that the top and bottom notes of each chord outline parallel major sevenths. The third part of the interval has the piano echoing the brass descent with slightly fuller chords. Again the chords appear to be biplanal chords made up of major triads supported by either incomplete dominant sevenths, diminished triads, or triads with the implications of an added sixth chord, but they are in fact chords of Mode 3, and lack only a few tones to be considered Messiaen's chord of resonance, which consists of all the tones available by striking the fundamental.[38]

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[37] Cf. Burkat, p. 262.

The upper voices of the gamelan chime in the tonal area of a dominant seventh in A major, although an F# has been substituted for the G# which would properly make the chord fit into that category. Here the auditor's subjective impressions of the tonal center cannot be discounted.

The structure of the movement is very clear, since the gamelan provides a constant element which appears eight times. The first two appearances are equal in length, comprising just under four measures. From that point, the gamelan section shrinks until at its fourth appearance it is less than one measure in length. From there it grows until at its seventh appearance it has attained the length of almost seven measures. At its eighth and final appearance, it has once again shrunk to a measure and a half.

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[38] See Technique of My Musical Language, I, 50; II, 37.

The piano-brass interludes appear between each one of the gamelan sections. They shrink with the gamelan; the fourth appearance of the interlude is, like the gamelan, the shortest interlude. And the seventh appearance of the interlude is also the longest.

These constant factors, against the shifting modalities and rhythms of strings and woodwinds and against the growing and decreasing cymbal, create a movement which is both tightly ordered and yet timeless in effect. Particularly appropriate here is Drew's remark that Messiaen is searching for a music which expresses a new Time and a new Space.[39] With a descent by tritone while the statue theme resounds, followed by a "fan" played by the piano simultaneously with a sliding descent by woodwinds and bassoons, four cymbal clashes and loud kettledrum beat, the movement comes to a close. Its purpose has been fulfilled, for it has introduced the entire symphony and prepared the way for the second movement.

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[39] Drew, pt. III, p. 51.

II. "CHANT D'AMOUR 1"

This movement, as the title "Chant d'amour 1" indicates, comprises a Song of Love but without words. Songs without words are certainly not new, of course. As is well known, Mendelssohn called some of his piano pieces "Songs without Words," and he also gave credence to the idea that there were some thoughts too deep for words and that only music was definite enough to convey them.[40] Messiaen's Song of Love *sans* words further has precedence in Berlioz's *Roméo et Juliette*, which intersperses orchestral music with choral and solo passages; however, at the most important part of the work, the declaration of love between Romeo and Juliet, Berlioz chooses orchestral sounds alone to express the feelings which are involved. Text and vocal music are eschewed in favor of pure expression of emotion in the sounds of the instrumental music of the orchestra. In "Chant d'amour 1," no text or program note tells us precisely what Messiaen is thinking of at each moment. It is possible, however, to see analogies with the text for *Harawi*, and also the composer's title for this movement is suggestive of material in Wagner's *Tristan und Isolde*. In *Harawi* as well as in Wagner's music drama, the lovers are observed on a flowery bank with their eyes entwined in rapturous gazes. Hints may further be derived from the program notes for the fifth movement of *Turangalîla-Symphonie*, where Messiaen tells us explicitly that in his presentation of love he is thinking in part of Romeo and Juliet, for whom each was the other's entire world. Finally, material from Cinq Rechants, where the lovers fly away into space, may also be relevant, since for Messiaen the experience of love is something exalting and transcending.

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[40] Donald Francis Tovey, "The Meaning of Music," in *The Main Stream of Music and Other Essays* (1949; rpt. Cleveland and New York: World, 1959), p. 397.

Like the first movement, the second movement is once again clear in its structure, and its choice of themes reveals further elements of the treatment of love as derived from the Tristan story. The thematic material for this movement includes the cyclic theme of love played by the Ondes Martenot, a lush theme which moves in and out of the tonal framework of F# major. Although this theme itself more often than not departs from the tonal center, the pedal chords in F# major in the strings and woodwinds establish some sense of tonality. The theme of love, like love itself, must be grounded in a stable relationship. In addition to the love theme, there are two trumpet motifs which are not related to any of the cyclic themes. These are in sharp contrast to the sweet, calm theme of love; instead, they are in turn raucous, teasing, and even harsh. The juxtaposition of the two themes is reminiscent of the tenets of Surrealism, which insist on the reconciliation of opposites or even impossibles. Two moods will then be set in opposition in this work just as in real life human beings are often torn between two states of mind.

The structure for this movement involves, as Messiaen indicates, a form with refrain (repeated after the first couplet), two couplets, and a development. In addition, there is a short introduction to begin the movement, and a final coda-like reminder of the refrain to close it. The refrain and couplet form is, of course, exploited to a far greater extent in the third part of the trilogy, Cinq Rechants, and will be discussed in more depth in connection with that work in Chapter VII, below. This form as used in the second movement of Turangalîla-Symphonie is shaped by a number of influences, among them the prime one being the alternating chant and rechant form of Claude le Jeune's Le Printemps, a collection of chansons published in 1603 shortly after his death.[41] Another probable influence on the form of this movement may be the medieval rondeau with its repeated refrain. Here the design was AB aab AB,[42] a design not copied exactly anywhere by Messiaen, who attaches no text to "Chant d'amour 1." Also, Messiaen's use of the couplet may be informed by Couperin's organ masses, which contain episodes called couplets. As Mellers remarks, "Couperin's couplets on the Kyrie, Gloria, Offertory, Benedictus (Elevation), Sanctus, and Agnus Dei have, like those of his contemporaries, mostly lost their connection with the plainsong base; they are short pieces, headed by a phrase of the Latin test, some in the old fugal idiom, others more operatic in technique."[43] Messiaen, as always, differs from any of his possible models or sources, and includes a development section toward the close of the alternation of refrain and couplet. His refrain and couplet form may be graphed as follows: R C R C Development R. As noted above, his final reference to the refrain theme of love is contained in a coda-like section.

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[41] A modern edition of Le Printemps is contained in Les Maîtres musiciens de la renaissance française, ed. Henry Expert (New York: Broude, n.d.), vols, XII-XIV.

[42] Gustave Reese, Music in the Middle Ages (New York: W.W. Norton, 1940). pp. 221-23; J. A. Westrup, "Medieval Song," in Early Medieval Music up to 1300, ed. Dom Anselm Hughes, New Oxford History of Music, II (London: Oxford Univ. Press, 1954), p. 245.

The introductory part of the movement is marked by loud, disjunctive, and extremely dissonant chords. For example, the first chord sounds all of the tones in the chromatic scale with the exception of F and D^b (C#). The chords following the opening one are only slightly less thick. The piano resounds with a G# in double octaves, and it is the piano motif g#'', f#''', f#', and d '' that is heard above the near cacophony of the thickest chords used thus far in either of the works we have examined by Messiaen (Turangalîla-Symphonie, p. 35, ms. 1-5, piano motif). An insistent thrumming is produced, first, by the snare drum, and second, by each group of instruments striking c#' in turn in a kind of one-note fugue with eleven entrances. This one-note fugue leads to the refrain, which is made up of one of the trumpet motifs and the theme of love.

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[43] Wilfred Mellers, François Couperin and the French Classical Tradition (New York: Dover, 1968), p. 86.

The trumpet motif used in the refrain is a teasing, Gershwinesque tune, which proceeds through the three trumpets, sometimes hocketing as it leaps from trumpet to trumpet. It moves by half step and by leap, moving in and out of an F# tonal center (Turangalîla-Symphonie, p. 38, ms. 1-6). Although there are many meanderings away from F#, the final two notes, being the third and fifth of the scale, place the motif within the context of F#.

While bassoons, horns, trombones, and tuba hold a dominant seventh chord in the key of F# major as a pedal chord, the Ondes Martenot plays its insistent melody above the pedal. It begins on tones C♮ and D♮, foreign to the F# pedal, which make it sound as if a C major tonality is being played against the F# major tonality. After a brief movement by step to tones which are within the context of F# major, the melody once again flies out of the tonality to outline a descending C major triad before returning to the third and fifth steps of the F# major scale (see Appendix, example 30a). This portion of the theme functions as a kind of "question," ending as it does on the fifth of the tonality. The "answer" begins lower and does not soar quite as high as the question; it too begins out of the tonality but ends on the key note F# after going through a number of non-harmonic tones. Its pedal chord is the tonic in F# major (see Appendix, example 30b). The weaving in and out of the tonal center gives the melody a sensuous, seductive quality and a delicious ambiguity, heightened by the slow tempo in eighth note values, as opposed to the fast and teasing trumpet motif in sixteenth notes. Again, as we have already noted, there is the juxtaposition of the two modes--the serious, sweet, even ponderous one of the theme of love, and the lighter, brighter one of the trumpet.

The first couplet is introduced by glissandos in the Ondes Martenot over soft *pizzicato* and *col legno* strings. This is alternated with a chromatic motif in two parts, played by flutes and bassoons. The first part of the motif begins on a lower pitch and generally works toward a higher one returning to the pitch on which it began (*Turangalîla-Symphonie*, p. 44, ms. 3-4, flutes and bassoons only). The second part of the motif begins higher and works both up and down before stopping on a $b^{b''}$ (*Turangalîla-Symphonie*, p. 45, ms. 4-5, and p. 46, ms. 1-2, flutes only). The Ondes-string material alternates with the flute-bassoon material four times. Then, with the familiar descending scale and chords of Mode 2 (a pattern of whole and half steps) played by the piano, flutes, oboes, and strings, coupled with an ascending scale in the English horn, clarinets, and bassoons to create a "fan," the couplet leads into a second refrain which is similar in structure to the first. This time, however, the trumpet motif is taken over by woodwinds and strings.

The second couplet again has two motifs; the first, played by the oboes and English horn, has a melody in chromatic steps and is "harmonized" by the interval of a perfect fourth. The parallel fourths, moving stepwise, have a distinctive sound and are separable from the rest of the harmonies occurring simultaneously. There are changing meters encompassing 2/8, 7/16, 4/8, 3/8, and 2/4 metrical divisions within an eleven measure span.

The trumpets carry the second motif. The rhythm is that of an eighth note followed by a sixteenth note played three times. The motif rocks back and forth on the third and second steps of the scale in E^b, then moves to the same scale steps in the key of F#. The two motifs then alternate, but on the third appearance of the first motif there is a chiming accompaniment by the piano, celesta, and glockenspiel in a litany of chords of ambiguous nature, possessing both the major and minor triad built on the same tone. The left hand of the piano part consists of parallel perfect fourths and diminished fifths, while the right hand consists of parallel major and minor sixths. Examining the first chords of the series, we find that it is built up from the lowest tone by fourths or fifths of various sizes: a diminished fifth, an augmented third whose sound is that of a perfect fourth, a diminished fourth whose sound is that of a major third, and another perfect fourth. It can thus be considered one of Messiaen's chords of superposition or it may be looked at as the combination of an incomplete dominant seventh on A^b and the first inversion of an A^b minor triad. Each of the tones of the chords moves upward either by step or minor third, but in each chord there is either a common tone from the last chord or some tones which are contiguous to the tones they move to in the next chord, creating a kind of enchainment. The parallel chords ring out with a sort of bell-like clarity, and the ear is charmed by the many changes Messiaen is able to effect in the realm of chord construction and by the pleasing ambiguity of each such construction (*Turangalîla-Symphonie*, p. 61, ms. 1-3, piano only).

The development takes the trumpet motif from the refrain and elongates it by constant repetition, extending a motif of a few notes into one covering twenty-five measures. Then the same motif is fragmented and tossed around. The motif of the trumpets in the second couplet is thereupon exploited by repetition and key change. More fragmented intervals are heard, as the entire development builds up to an immensely slow statement of the theme of love from the refrain, this time in the Ondes Martenot, brass, and woodwinds, heavily weighted with chords. Both trumpet themes are heard in fragmentation, then a final fragment of melody from the Ondes is heard, which seems like a variation on the "answer" portion of the theme of love outlining as it does the first and fifth scale steps of the key of F# major (Appendix, example 32, see also example 30b). The familiar closing descending formula is played by piano and strings, followed by a drum beat which ends the movement.

III. "TURANGALÎLA 1"

"Turangalîla 1" carries the name of the symphony; thus it is like the previous movement, a "Song of Love." It is also a "Hymn to Joy" and a time play. The movement has three melodic themes, one in the solo clarinet and the Ondes Martenot; another in the bassoons, trombones, gamelan, and piano; and a third in the oboes and flutes. The three themes may be likened to three *dramatis personae* which alternately take the stage. Messiaen also points out that there is a fourth "theme" which is rhythmic in character.[44] Two moods are present in the movement, one of calm and cool created by slower tempi (*Presque lent*, *rêveur*, and *Très modéré*) and soft dynamics, and another more passionate mood created by a slightly faster tempo (*Bien modéré*) and louder dynamics. Once again, the music is characterized by complex rhythmic schemes, in this instance including paired augmentations and diminutions in the horns and violoncellos, augmentations and diminutions in the percussion instruments, and a rhythmic canon in the oboe and flute. The augmentations and diminutions in the percussion instruments are important enough for Messiaen to consider them a "theme" in themselves.

The first theme, stated first by the clarinet and then by the Ondes Martenot, is a wide-ranging melody which plays on dissonant intervals and generally avoids the consonant sounds of scale steps 1, 3, and 5 of the tonality. Its insistence upon the augmented fourth, the diminished fifth, the ninth, and the major seventh (spelled unconventionally) and its general (though not total) avoidance of thirds and fifths are reminiscent of the construction of twelve-tone music. In one instance, a pair of embellishments escapes out of the tonality by means of the interval of an augmented fourth. The melody comes back to rest on the tone with which it began (Appendix, example 33). At the second appearance of the theme in the clarinet, the theme is expanded by means of interpolated notes, while the Ondes Martenot simply repeats its first statement (Appendix, example 34). The third appearance of the theme in the clarinets is again extended (Appendix, example 35). The "harmony" below the theme is very thin. It consists of an A^{b} in the bells (an augmented fourth below the first and last notes) held for the value of a half note, and an eighth note cluster--G♮-A^{b}-A♮--chiming softly in the vibraphone near the end of the theme.

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[44] Messiaen's record jacket notes for *Turangalîla-Symphonie*.

Along with the second appearance of the theme in the Ondes Martenot and its third and final appearance in the clarinets, there is a pizzicato chromatic descent in the contrabass. As the contrabass continues its downward progress, the notes become elongated and separated by rests, creating a sense of anticipation for what is to come. The whole section has maintained its calm and dreamy mood, as indicated by its tempo marking (*Presque lent, rêveur*).

Another short descending passage in the clarinet leads to the first *Bien modéré* section in which the bassoons and trombones (but predominantly the trombones) have a theme based on the intervals of a rising augmented fourth (the tritone) and a descending augmented fifth (*Turangalîla-Symphonie*, p. 92, ms. 1-4, bassoons and trombones only). Not much tonal center is present in what the trombones are playing until the tenth measure in the section, when they play E♮, E♮, F#, F#, D#, C#, which sound like a sequence in C# minor. In that sequence, the duple division of the measure goes against the regular 3/8 meter (*Turangalîla-Symphonie*, p. 94, ms. 1-4, trombones only). Above and around the trombone theme, the gamelan plays a melodic and rhythmic ostinato consisting of leaping intervals, with the added charm of acciacaturas preceding several of the tones in the ostinato. The right hand of the piano plays the same octave intervals as the gamelan, but the left hand plays parallel diminished fifths and augmented fourths to reinforce the tritonal theme of the trombones. The Ondes Martenot glissandos slowly from a g#''' down to an a♮'.

The next section, marked *Bien modéré*, is based on theme one, played by the trumpet simultaneously with a motif from the second theme played by the French horns (*Turangalîla-Symphonie*, p. 96, ms. 1-4, and p. 97, ms. 1-3, trumpets and French horns only). Also present but perhaps only perceived subliminally is, as noted by Burkat, the augmentation and diminution of horns and strings.[45] The horns subtract two sixteenth-note values from the first note, and add four sixteenth-note values to the next, proceeding in this fashion to the end. The strings at the same time have their own scheme, which consists of subtracting four sixteenth-note values from the first note and adding three sixteenth-note values to the next, and so on through the section. Above it all, the piccolos chirp out high chromatic tones, adding a brilliance to the texture.

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[45] Burkat, p. 263.

The Très modéré (very restrained) section, like the Presque lent section, is governed more by coolness and calmness than by passion. In this section, the third theme enters for the first time, as does the fourth rhythmic "theme," consisting of the complex augmentation and diminution schemes played by the percussion.

The third theme belongs to the first flute and first oboe; the melody is a wide-ranging one with dissonant intervallic leaps, played as a retrograde rhythmic canon. Both the melody and the rhythmic pattern take twelve measures to run through the forward and retrograde versions of the canon, with the crossing of the two patterns occurring at the end of measure 6 and the beginning of measure 7 (Turangalîla-Symphonie, p. 99, ms. 1-6, and p. 100, ms. 1-6, first flute and first oboe only). Beginning in this section and continuing to almost the close of the movement is the rhythmic "theme" which is as follows: the maracas, which Messiaen designates as "mineral," at first diminishes and then "grows" (is augmented); the drum, which he calls "animal," first "grows" (is augmented and then diminishes; and the woodblock, termed "vegetable," remains the same.[46]

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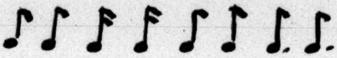
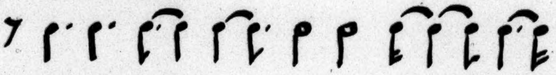
[46] See Messiaen's record jacket notes for Turangalîla-Symphonie.

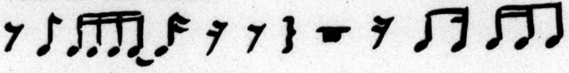
Maracas diminishes, then grows:



Drum grows, then diminishes:



Woodblock remains the same:



(*Turangalîla-Symphonie*, p. 101, ms. 1-4, and p. 102, ms. 1-4)

An ostinato in parallel octaves is played by the gamelan as an accompaniment to the flute and oboe soli.

In the next and final *Bien modéré* section, the trumpet plays double *forte* the clarinet-Ondes theme from the beginning of the movement, while at measure 7 the trombones bring in the second theme, which they had announced earlier in the movement. At the same time, there is the familiar ostinato accompaniment by the gamelan, and in the woodwinds arpeggios are heard. The strings provide a thick "rug" of chords built up of dissonant seconds. With a return to the first tempo, *Presque lent, rêveur*, and a fragment from the third theme, this time accompanied by arpeggios in the piano and celesta and delicate sounds in the percussion, the movement comes to an end. The final statement is from the woodblocks, beating a long-short-short-short-long rhythm, accompanied by the soft pizzicato of the contrabass.

IV. "CHANT D'AMOUR 2"

In "Chant d'amour 2," the fourth movement of *Turangalîla-Symphonie*, Messiaen seems more interested in formal design than even in the previous movements; at the same time, rhythmic complexities are eschewed. The general plan for the movement is that of scherzo and trio. Messiaen lists the nine sections of the work as follows:

> 1) Scherzo for piccolo and bassoon, with rhythmic theme on wood block. 2) Bridge. 3) Refrain and first trio, for the woodwinds. 4) Second trio, for string soloists. 5) Superposition of the two trios with bird songs on the piano. 6) Bridge. 7) Reprise and superposition of Scherzo, two trios, and "statue" theme. All the elements of the piece are heard simultaneously, in a complex scaffolding of ten superposed musical entities. 8) Cadenza for piano. 9) Coda, where one hears the "flower" theme pianissimo, the "statue" theme fortissimo, the refrain in the Ondes and solo violins.[47]

Thus he parts company with the conventional Song-Trio-Song form by alternating scherzo with two trios, superposing scherzo and both trios, adding bridges, and juxtaposing scherzo and trios with bird songs and piano cadenzas. At the last he adds a coda to the entire structure.

But his scherzo has much in common with the conventional scherzo, succinctly described by Willi Apel as characterized by "rapid tempo in 3/4 meter, vigorous rhythm, a certain abruptness of thought involving elements of surprise and whim, and a kind of bustling humor that ranges from the playful to the sinister."[48] Messiaen's scherzo theme fulfills the characteristics of its genre, since there is a staccato, leaping melody with abrupt starts and stops, played in widely-spaced octaves by the piccolo and bassoon. The first leap in the melody is a downward one from d#''' to d♮'', the interval of an octave plus a minor second. From there it rises to the major second from d♮'' to and e♮''. The next motif of the theme turns the formula around: instead of down-up, the pattern is up-down, with the d♮'' being a point of departure for the d# ''', returning again to the e♮''. It is neither a mirror image nor a retrograde form, but nevertheless the two motifs sound similar enough to give the theme a certain amount of unification. Rising chromatics take us to the next part of the theme, which consists of an ascending major seventh, a descending minor second followed by the same interval which began the movement. Even though the tune abounds in non-harmonic tones, it returns to d♮ often enough to establish that tone as its center.

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[47] Ibid.

Beneath the melodic theme, the woodblock beats out its rhythmic theme (Turangalîla-Symphonie, p. 111, ms. 1-10). The piano enters, with the right hand playing four thirty-second notes against the left hand playing three sixteenth notes. These arpeggios, added to the melody, create jumbles of sound.

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[48] Willi Apel, Harvard Dictionary of Music, 2nd ed. (Cambridge: Harvard Univ. Press, 1969), p. 755.

Following the scherzo, there is a bridge which does not sound as if it is simply marking time, but as if it is leading to something else. It has a "tune" which relies heavily on the descending tritone for its structure. The piano plays an elaborate figuration which in part consists of outlining a diminished triad, or of exploiting the intervals of parallel seconds in the right hand and parallel thirds in the left hand. A tremendous stepwise "fan," which opens outward instead of closing in, leads to the refrain and first trio.

The refrain is played by the Ondes Martenot along with the woodwinds and strings against a I^6_4 in the key of A major; it is one of the themes which weaves in and around a tonal center by means of dissonant intervals. Partly because of the fact that the Ondes plays it, partly because of the wide, dissonant intervals, and partly because of its slow, insistent nature, the theme resembles the cyclic theme of love. Presented in the example found in the appendix is the theme of love as it appears in the second movement, with "question" and then "answer" being cited. Below each phrase is noted the interval between the preceding tone and the one which follows it, along with an indication of whether the interval goes up or down. It will be noted that the first two intervals of the "question" and the "answer" are the same, but that they do not proceed in the same direction. There is no possibility that either is a retrograde version or an inversion of the other, yet, as indicated, they have an affinity for one another and show a certain relationship of contour (Appendix, example 36). The version of the theme of love found at the end of the second movement has the rising minor second which appeared in the "question" portion of the theme from the second movement and the descending perfect fourth from both the "question" and "answer" portion of the theme as found in "Chant d'amour 1" (Appendix, example 37). Now, the version of the theme of love as it appears in the fourth movement has even fewer intervallic echoes from its earlier appearances; yet in the similarity of contour and also in its weaving in and out of the tonal center, there is once again a kind of aural or psychological identity with the previous appearances of theme of love (Appendix, example 38). As noted above, the theme is undergirded by a I_4^6 pedal in the key of A major, played mainly by the brasses and very low strings and giving the theme a tonal stability. The tones themselves in the theme outline a dominant seventh on the sixth scale step in A major, once again establishing the tonal center.

The theme for the trio is carried by the oboes, and is harmonized in thick cluster chords. The first chord may be analyzed as a ninth chord with a major seventh within it, and the last as an added sixth on A, but the six chords within the framework of the first and the last are made up of major and minor seconds in such close proximity as to create chords with a great amount of tension within them. Still, played softly as they are, they chime with a kind of bell-like tone. The rhythm, with its pattern of short-long-long-short-short-long, has a sense of deliberate hesitation.

In the next section, the second trio, the solo strings carry the melodic and rhythmic theme (Turangalîla-Symphonie, p. 130, ms. 1-7). The theme moves largely by stepwise motion. The Ondes returns with the refrain which began section 3, which was the refrain and first trio.

At section 5, the two trio themes are superposed, and the piano chimes out bird songs. Here the bird songs are barred, unlike the wild free ones in Harawi, but as in the song cycle they are characterized by many fast notes--i.e., by groups of five, six, and seven thirty-second notes. As Messiaen has stated, the pitches are high because that is the range of birds in nature.[49]

The bridge is repeated, almost verbatim. The changes include making a descending scale passage ascend and vice versa, and adding a fan which closes, thus leading to the next section, the reprise.

In the seventh section, there is a reprise of the scherzo, both trios, and the terrifying statue theme which has not appeared since the first movement. The scherzo theme is heard clearly, the first trio theme is perceptible, and the statue theme in the trombones cuts through the texture admirably in its two elongated appearances. The arpeggios in the piano and celesta chime through also. The rest of the texture is so thick that nothing much else is discerned except as one would note the fibers of a tightly woven rug. The section, instead of coming to a close, simply halts on an unresolved harmony.

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[49] Samuel, p. 113.

After a rest, the piano cadenza (section 8) begins. Messiaen once again shows his ingenuity by not repeating any of the devices he had used in the cadenza in the first movement. The arpeggio which begins the cadenza outlines an added sixth chord in C in the right hand while the left hand outlines an added sixth chord built on F# (beginning with the third of the chord). In the arpeggio, the pianist must juggle a group of eight notes in the right hand against a group of ten in the left hand. Different sizes of vertical thirds and seconds leap down by means of melodic sevenths in triplet rhythms. Messiaen's cluster chords leap in an ascending fashion for seven measures, and then the arpeggio which began the cadenza is heard twice in succession. In gradually accelerating speed and ascending octave by octave, the following pattern emerges: C#-D#-D♮-C♮-F#-G#-G♮-F♮. With a final arpeggio and chords with clustered major and minor seconds, culminating in a chord consisting of the major seconds C#-D# and F#-G#, the cadenza ends.

Section 9 is a coda, which begins with the flower theme, followed by the massive trill from the first movement which introduces the statue theme fortissimo. An ascending arpeggio by the piano, outlining an A^b major triad in the right hand and a tetrachord made up of the tones F, G^b, A, and C in the left hand, proceeds through the octaves upward to e^{b}'''' and c♮''''. The arpeggios lead to descending chords, again played by the piano and joined by the celesta. These chords are contiguous parallel augmented elevenths and thirteenths, arranged in a "canon" in which the first chord in the left hand is imitated by the right hand two chords later, and so on down through a progression covering more than two octaves. The celesta chords "stagger" even more than the piano canon is staggered, since three of the same chords in the celesta are juxtaposed with six of the chords in the piano.[50] These chords are of the type designated earlier as "enchaining." Simultaneously, the strings play the variant of the theme of love found in the refrain and first trio in section 3.

To close the movement, the piano begins an arpeggiated added sixth chord on A. David Drew notes that "Messiaen makes no attempt to rationalize his...harmonic obsession, the added sixth." Drew's perceptive suggestion is that the added sixth is "'the inhibitory degree _par excellence_', because in an odd way it is half concord and half discord. The consonance and dissonance exist side by side, in a state of mutual frustration. Thus the added sixth satisfies Messiaen's need for musical materials that subvert the traditional tension-relaxation pattern, and hence alter the relationship of the music to the time factor."[51] Therefore, Messiaen's choice of the added sixth, which seems to roll on and on upward, is another means of destroying time and asserting the eternally transcendent in his music.

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[50] Messiaen insists on calling this passage a "fan," and since there is a pedal chord on E major, there is some justification for seeing these chords as "closing down" onto the pedal chord.

[51] Drew, pt. I, p. 40.

V. "JOIE DU SANG DES ÉTOILES"

The first four movements of the symphony have served more or less as formalistic introduction or prelude to the climax, which is the remarkable fifth movement, "Joie du sang des étoiles" (Joy of the Stars' Blood"). The formal schemes of the first four movements have shifted from movement to movement, creating a kaleidoscopic effect of designs perhaps reminiscent of the shapes seen in art identified with synthetic cubism. Now the symphony's meaning bursts forth as it reaches its focal point. This movement is connected, Messiaen notes, with the cosmic dance of the lovers (discussed at some length in connection with Song XI, "Katchikatchi les étoiles," of Harawi); with the love of Romeo and Juliet, but not necessarily with the tragic aspects of that love; and, most importantly, with the love of Tristan and Isolde.[52] The composer also indicates that important aspects of the mythos of this movement are revealed through André Breton's poem "L'Union Libre" ("Free Union"), a sensuous panegyric on the physical qualities of the poet's wife. Messiaen uses one musical theme for this movement, a variant of the statue theme, now not ponderous, heavy, and terrifying, but lightly leaping and joyous in mood. However, he also brings back the original statue theme and adds to it new rhythmic interest.

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[52] Messiaen's record jacket notes for Turangalîla-Symphonie.

The imagery of "Joie du sang des étoiles" is first of all linked to Song XI of *Harawi* in which the leaping, grasshopper-like motions of the stars were transferred to the lovers, who became stars and joined in the cosmic dance. The music of this song, entitled "Katchikatchi les étoiles," represented the dance of the stars and lovers in jagged rhythms and a melodic line that rises first stepwise and then by leap, descending from the key note of the scale by means of tritones. Now, in the fifth movement of the *Turangalîla-Symphonie*, the same cosmic dance is present in the upward bounding theme, replicating the movements of a wild, leaping dance by lovers who have transcended time and earthly boundaries.

Not surprisingly, Messiaen has made reference to Chagall's paintings in which lovers, like his own, fly off into space. Hence Chagall's *The Red Sun* (1948), painted not long after Messiaen had completed his *Turangalîla-Symphonie*, shows a scene which would appear familiar to students of the Tristan trilogy. One art critic has commented with reference to *The Red Sun*:

> Again and again in Chagall's pictures these couples appear--lovers, betrothed, newlywed. They leave the ground and soar up in the heavens, the effusiveness of their feelings defying the law of gravity. So has he celebrated Love in countless paintings, countless regroupings.... Before the red arc of the sun, the girl floats up in a dress of

> dreamy blue to meet her betrothed with his yellow suit, yellow face and green hair. The surrounding figures and objects share their joy...the flying violinist...flowers, flowers.[53]

The expansiveness of the lovers' mood in the fifth movement is evidenced in Messiaen's misquotation in his program notes of Shakespeare's Juliet: "My beauty is as boundless as the sea."[54] Messiaen also quotes the alleged words of Tristan to Isolde: "If the whole world were here with us, I would not see anyone but you." The composer is using his sources freely, for we find no such statement either in the early versions (Beroul, Thomas of Britain, Gottfried von Strassbourg) or in Wagner. However, during the love-duet in Act II, Scene ii of Wagner's opera, there are passages sung by both of the lovers which express something of the same preoccupation with one another to the exclusion of the world around them:

> brich mein Blick sich
> wonner blindet.
> erbleicht die Welt
> mit ihrem Blenden....[55]

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[53] Werner Schmalenbach, *Chagall*, trans. M. Ledivelec (Milan: Uffici Press, n.d.), p. 24.

[54] Messiaen's record jacket notes for *Turangalîla-Symphonie*. Juliet actually says, "My *bounty* is as boundless as the sea" (*Romeo and Juliet* II.ii.133; italics mine).

[55] Wagner, *Tristan und Isolde*, ed. Robb, p. 82.

In this reference as well as the one to Romeo and Juliet, we see that the lovers' mood is expansive enough to encompass the world and sea and, paradoxically, to abjure everything--world, sea, time, space, and other persons.

The imagery of the "stars' blood" is extremely mixed, since stars are said to be symbolic of the spirit, while blood represents passion.[56] Thus the lovers' physical passion has a spiritual aspect as well. Stars can also be compared to blood since they are often found in clusters which, like blood, are subject to the appearance of disintegration and reintegration, or in the words of the alchemical formula that Messiaen likes to quote, they "coagulate and disintegrate." Again we are reminded of the alchemical formula which stands for the reconciliation of masculine and feminine elements.[57]

But it is the reference to André Breton's "L'Union Libre" that places all other imagery into perspective. In that poem Breton speaks sensuously of his wife's great power over him:

> My wife with the woodfire hair
> With the heat lightning thoughts.[58]

In conclusion she is "My wife, with eyes of the plain of Water,

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[56] See J. E. Cirlot, A Dictionary of Symbols, trans. Jack Sage (New York: Philosophical Library, 1962), pp. 295-96.

[57] Burckhardt, p. 149.

[58] André Breton, Selected Poems, trans. Kenneth White (London: Jonathan Cape, 1969), p. 31. For an interpretation of this poem, see Anna Balakian, Surrealism: The Road to the Absolute, revised ed. (New York: Dutton, 1970), p. 152.

Air, Earth, and Fire."[59] The beloved for Breton (and, one gathers, for Messiaen as well) is so basic to life as to be on the level of the four basic alchemical elements: she *is* Earth, Water, Fire, and Air. The physical presence of the beloved is very strongly portrayed in that poem, since the poet refers, for example, to "arms of sea-surf," "armpits of marten and beechnut," and "tongue of rubbed amber"--all belonging to the beloved. These images together serve as clues to the passion, power, and physical release which are being celebrated in this movement.

Messiaen's allusion to the Breton poem is one bit of information to prove that the love celebrated here is physical as well as spiritual.[60] Thus as Goléa has commented with reference to this symphony, "The amorous language of Messiaen, expressed thus in music, is true to the sense of erotic sculptures of India, entirely lacking hypocrisy, and even approaching shamelessness."[61] Like the statues of lovers on the temple at Konarak in India, the erotic becomes symbolic of rejoicing.

As his objective correlative for the passionateness of the cosmic dance of the lovers, Messiaen chooses a variant of the statue theme; this theme is now cleansed of the terrifying associations with the Venus d'Ille, and is now more like the warmly erotic and exhilarating statues at Konarak. The musical theme is now a joyous, wide-ranging theme which can represent the lovers who have become like stars and whose mood is so expansive as both to encompass the world and to deny its presence. In its earlier form, the statue theme was made up of thirds moving from one tonal center to another (see Appendix, example 27). Now in the fifth movement, the interval of the third is still important to the first part or the *a* section of the theme. The phrase begins and ends in D^b major but falls out of the key by the third interval, with a G♮-B♮ major third, and again at the fifth interval with an E♮-G♮ third. These non-related thirds are entered and left so quickly as to prevent the basic D^b major tonality from being upset. The ear may recognize that a tiny excursion has been made, but it is perceived as embroidery on the basic tonic added sixth in D^b (*Turangalîla-Symphonie*, p. 163, ms. 1-4, woodwinds only). The melodic line, which utilizes a perfect fifth and two diminished fifths (Messiaen's favorite tritone), leaps upward and then descends. In contrast, the *b* section of the theme starts at a lower pitch and then leaps upward. That section of the theme stays within the D^b major tonality and outlines a tonic chord; it rises to the second scale step, returns to the key note, moves down to the sixth of the scale and leaps from there to the fifth scale step (*Turangalîla-Symphonie*, p. 163, ms. 5-8, strings only). There is one chord--the sixth in the series--which could be considered as a tonic seventh in C with an added sixth. The slight excursion does not destroy the tonal effect.

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[59] Translation in Messiaen's record jacket notes for *Turangalîla-Symphonie*. A slightly different rendering of the line "Aux yeux de niveau d'eau de niveau d'air de terre et de feu" is given by White in *Selected Poems*, p. 25.

[60] See footnote 1, above.

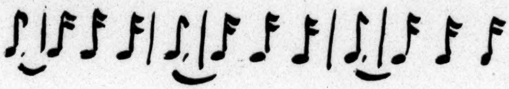
[61] Goléa, *Rencontrez*, p. 87.

The rhythmic pattern for both parts of the theme consists of three sixteenth notes, and a sixteenth note followed by an eighth note. The alternating eighths and sixteenths further connect the theme with the jagged cosmic dance of the lovers in Harawi.

Following the statement of both parts of the theme, another variant is heard, starting on the key note of D^b major (Appendix, example 39). Both the solo trumpet and the Ondes Martenot in turn play this variant. The close of the entire exposition is a fan, with the woodwinds, brass, and strings carrying the descending tones and the piano carrying the ascending ones (in this case, a whole-tone scale).

The whole sequence of the a and b sections of the theme, the variant of the theme, and the fan, plus a variation of hurled intervals and another motif by brass and winds, constitute the exposition. There will be two more such with the purpose of creating a triple exposition with variation form, followed by a development, piano cadenza, and coda.

The "hurled intervals," mentioned above, consist of minor sixth, diminished fifths, and minor seconds, all of which continue the leaping motion. The variation is a strident, insistent motif in the brass and winds, which consists essentially of four repeated chords. The chords to a large extent are superposed minor seconds, mixed with major seconds or clusters of adjacent tones (Appendix, example 40). The third chord has a cluster in the center, consisting of a G^{b}, A^{b}, and A♮. The rhythm also adds to the insistent quality:



There is one more set of hurled chords, capped by four chords which have a suspiciously jazzy flavor, each separated from the other by the space of a measure (Appendix, example 41). The chords include an added sixth on the tonic, a supertonic seventh, a combined major seventh on the raised tonic, and another added sixth chord on the tonic. These chords, along with the excitement generated by the whole movement, lend credence to Mellers' comment on the relationship between *Turangalîla-Symphonie* and jazz:

> In this work the corybantic fast movements are significantly allied to the new-old primitivism of jazz both in the hypnotic repetitiveness of their riffs and breaks and in the blatantly scored juiciness of their harmony.[62]

In the development, the joyous theme is fragmented and is otherwise transformed by modulation and key change, while the original statue theme is brought back in the horns, trumpets, and trombones. Here Messiaen uses what he calls "rhythmic characters," which alternately "grow" (augment), diminish, and remain the same.[63]

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[62] Mellers, *Caliban Reborn*, p. 104.

[63] Messiaen's record jacket notes for *Turangalîla-Symphonie*.

The horns and trombones at first are diminished in a regular progression (*Turangalîla-Symphonie*, p. 186, ms. 1-9, and p. 187, ms. 1-5, horns and trombones only). Next, the trombones present a pattern that remains the same rhythmically (p. 188, ms. 1-8, and p. 189, ms. 1, trombones only). The horns and trombones next are found "growing" (augmenting) at the second note of each group of two (p. 190, ms. 5-8. and p. 191, ms. 1-2, horns and trombones only). Canonic imitation is found in the horns and trumpets (p. 205, ms. 1-10, horns and trumpets only). While brass instruments play the original statue theme, woodwinds play the joyous statue theme, and strings puruse an independent chromatic path; the gamelan keeps up a steady ostinato which adds to the already thick texture.

But it is the tremendous energy of this movement which separates it from other works by Messiaen and which even sets it apart from other movements of the same symphony. David Drew has commented on this energy:

> Not since the *Alleluia* of *L'Ascension* has Messiaen been influenced by the dance, and never before have the quantitative rhythms possessed such kinetic force. Everything, from the wonderfully varied orchestration to the close-knit cellular structure...contributes to the accumulation of a tension almost too great to bear.[64]

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[64] Drew, pt. III, p. 54.

Then Drew cogently notes how the tension is resolved and how the cadenza, based on the thirds of the original statue theme, is brought in:

> At the climax, five fortissimo chords deflect the impetus of the music, and its entire force is thrown into a cadenza for the piano. Although the piano has nothing but the bare thirds of the cyclic theme in the semiquaver rhythm in which they have been heard throughout, the instrument seems, in some unaccountable way, to have been invested with a force greater than that of the orchestra. It is as if the fortissimo chords had brought about some kind of nuclear fission--indeed, in a strictly musical sense they have. The rhythmic nucleii are disintegrated and there is nothing left but for the music to return to its most elemental state--the cyclic theme. Its re-statement, in a new harmonic guise, after the piano's wild cadenza, is the natural conclusion to the movement.[65]

The coda, as Drew indicates, once again brings back the statue theme in its original form, and then the movement closes on a long-held tonic chord with added sixth. The cosmic dance, here an artistic euphemism for the lovers' orgiastic expression of their love, has come to a close. The lovers will now sleep in the Garden of Love's Sleep. Thus ends the first half of the symphony, which has culminated in the remarkable symbolic disintegration and reintegration of the fifth movement.

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[65] Ibid.

CHAPTER VI

TURANGALÎLA-SYMPHONIE, PART II:

FULFILLMENT

"Jardin du sommeil d'amour" ("Garden of Love's Sleep") which is the sixth movement of the massive *Turangalîla-Symphonie* opens the last half of the symphony; this second part of the work might be considered a continued fulfillment of the love celebrated in the first half of the symphony. In the sixth movement, all is idyllic, but it will not be possible for this state to continue indefinitely. Thus the seventh movement contains once again a descent into terror, apparently symbolizing the way in which conscience threatens those who love and enjoy. The eighth movement, "Development of Love," is however, a fairly straightforward link in the chain of fulfillment; nevertheless, there are here reminders of the terrifying statue theme. The ninth movement, "Turangalîla 3," recalls the calm and contemplative mood of "Turangalîla 1," its "mate" in the first half of the symphony, while the last movement echoing the fifth movement, contains the final resolution of the entire symphony--the breaking forth into unmitigated joy.

VI. "JARDIN DU SOMMEIL D'AMOUR"

Here in the movement entitled "Jardin du sommeil d'amour" which begins the progression toward the ultimate joy of the conclusion of the second section of *Turangalîla-Symphonie*, the lovers are found, following the exciting and exhausting dance of the fifth movement, asleep in the Garden of Love's Sleep. The scene is reminiscent of the bank of flowers on which Wagner's Tristan and Isolde recline and also of the fenced-in orchard behind the castle of Tintagel where, according to Bédier's redaction of the medieval sources, Tristan and Yseult were accustomed to meet.[1] In that orchard are "numberless trees" with "fruit on them, birds and clusters of sweet grapes." Here Tristan and the queen kept their tryst, and it is said that "the night and the branches of the pine protected them."[2] Further source material for the garden scene in *Turangalîla-Symphonie* may also be found in the famous grotto in the forest in Gottfried von Strassburg and Thomas of Britain or the forest bower in Beroul; here King Mark finds the lovers asleep with a sharp sword placed between them.[3] In Beroul, the king looks at the lovers and muses: "I can well believe, if I have any sense, that if they loved each other wickedly they would certainly not be wearing clothes and there would be no sword between them. They would be lying together quite differently. I was intent on killing them, but now I shall not touch them...."[4]

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[1] Joseph Bédier, *The Romance of Tristan and Iseult*, trans. Hilaire Belloc and Paul Rosenfeld (1945; rpt. New York: Vintage, 1965), pp. 45-46. At this point, Bedier claims to be relying on Beroul's early version of the story.

[2] Bédier, p. 46.

[3] Gottfried von Strassburg, *Tristan*, p. 273; Thomas of Britain, *The Romance of Tristram and Ysolt*, trans. Roger Sherman Loomis (1923; rpt. New York: Dutton, 1967), p. 181; Beroul, *The Romance of Tristan*, trans. Alan S. Fredrick (Baltimore: Penguin, 1970), p. 93.

[4] *Ibid.*, p. 93.

But no threatening figure disturbs the lovers in the sixth movement, where fruit, flowers, and bird song are components of the imagery in the "Garden of Love's Sleep." The fruit imagery, uppermost in Messiaen's mind, must stem at least in part from Hieronymus Bosch's painting *The Garden of Earthly Delights*, especially the central panel, since the composer refers to this work in both his program notes to the symphony and in the text of *Cinq Rechants*. In the latter work, it is the lovers encapsulated in the crystal ball in Bosch's painting that become attached to the mythic core of the Tristan story as used in Messiaen's composition. In the painting, the fruits are oversized, fantastically shaped, and brilliantly colored--at once sensual and decadent. The flowers are certainly the fuchsia, gladiolus, and corn lily, previously mentioned by Messiaen in his introduction to the entire symphony, notes to the sixth movement he tells us that there are "new" flowers as well which he unfortunately does not identify. Significantly, although this movement would be an ideal place for the introduction once again of the flower theme, Messiaen avoids it, preferring instead to evoke flower imagery through other and more subtle means. In addition to fruits and flowers, birds are also present in the garden. In his gnomic way, Messiaen writes: "All the birds of the stars,"[5] which is a backward glance at *Harawi*, Song X, "Amour oiseau d'etoile." Once again birds and stars, both associated with the heavens, are linked to the lovers who themselves can hence be considered to be like heavenly bodies. In this movement, the bird songs are provided by the piano and are clearly identifiable as such.

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[5] Messiaen's record jacket notes for *Turangalîla-Symphonie*.

Messiaen says:

> The two lovers are wrapped in the sleep of love. A landscape has issued from them. The garden that surrounds them is called Tristan; the garden that surrounds them is called Isolde.[6]

Now both lovers, not just the beloved, enclose the fruit and flower imagery previously found in Harawi; in the song cycle, "Toi, de fleur, de fruit, de ciel et d'eau" of Song II ("Bonjour toi, colombe verte") had referred only to the beloved. In Turangalîla-Symphonie, the lovers are united with each other and with nature. Through this transcendental experience, the two have become one--and they have achieved harmony with all that exists in the universe. Once again, the problem of time is brought to our attention as Messiaen comments: "Time slips by, forgotten. The lovers are outside time. Let's not wake them."[7] The lovers are freed from the tyranny of time, which must be regarded as standing for an authoritarianism antagonistic to love.

How does Messiaen handle the problem of depicting the lovers' sleep in the midst of the wonders of the garden which include fruits, flowers, and birds along with a sensitivity to the ebbing and flowing of time as well as the complete denial of time? The music composed for this movement presents the greatest contrast possible with the movement which immediately preceded it, since the fifth movement is noisy, boisterous, thick-textured, with busy, energetic rhythms and with a wild, leaping melodic line. Now the theme is again a single one, and it is, according to Messiaen, the cyclic theme of love; the tempo is slow, the dynamic level soft, and the texture extremely thin, even transparent.

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[6] Ibid.

[7] Ibid.

The structure chosen is strophic, with four periods of melody, including a coda. The thematic material is drawn from earlier appearances of the theme of love, but it is not identical to any of them. Indeed, only a certain weaving in and out of the tonal center of F# major, the constancy of the voice of the Ondes Martenot singing the theme, and the interval from the tonic down to the fifth of the scale mark it as related to earlier appearances of what Messiaen calls the theme of love. In the discussion of the fourth movement above, each of the previous appearances of the theme was shown and the similarities between its appearance in the fourth and second movements were shown. This theme of love as it manifests itself in the sixth movement is different from each of its previous appearances since it adheres more closely to the F# major tonal center. Nevertheless, the downward leap from tonic to fifth acts as an identifying motto to each version of the theme of love.

There are three basic parts or variants of the theme as it is used in the sixth movement. The a theme utilizes the motto as its ending on its first occurrence; on its second occurrence, the ending consists of a leap downward from the third of the scale to the fifth below (Appendix, example 42). The b theme then begins from above, and descends, outlining the major triad as it goes (Appendix, example 43). The c theme again begins from above and leaps down a seventh (Appendix, example 44).

The bird songs, played by the piano, provide associations with all the other garden imagery, including fruits and flowers. The bird song element also creates a constant atonal embroidery over the tonal theme (*Turangalîla-Symphonie*, p. 240, ms. 1-3, piano only). Often the bird songs reiterate one tone or a pair of tones; here, as in the example above, the melodic interval of the tritone is repeated. Messiaen notes that the "catalogue" of birds in the symphony includes the nightingale, the blackbird, and the hedge sparrow.[8] In addition to the bird songs carried in the piano part, there are three other independent atonal melodies, provided by the solo flute, the solo clarinet, and the vibraphone (*Turangalîla-Symphonie*, p. 240, ms. 1, flute only; ms. 5-6, solo clarinet only; and ms. 1-3, vibraphone only).

Temple blocks play two rhythms, "one in forward motion toward longer and longer durations, going from the present toward the future; one in retrograde movement, from very long durations toward durations less long, converting the future into the past."[9] The rhythmic pattern in forward motion proceeds from a value equal to seven units of sixteenth notes to a value equal to thirty-eight units of sixteenth notes; the one in retrograde movement proceeds from a value equal to forty-seven units of sixteenth notes to one of thirty-eight units. The subtle rhythmic scheme, virtually imperceptible to the ear, nevertheless accomplishes for Messiaen what he wishes: the destruction of the tyranny of time over the lovers.

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[8] *Ibid.*

All of these combined elements, operating both independently from one another and yet in a kind of tenuous cooperation, are perceived as a wonderful and delicate *Klangfarbenmelodie*. Messiaen does not need the flower theme to suggest a garden with lovers sleeping in it. The long, slow theme of love with the atonal bird songs and independent embroideries of clarinet, flute, and vibraphone, along with the rhythmic canon of the temple blocks, accomplishes Messiaen's aim admirably.

VII. "TURANGALÎLA 2"

After the orgiastic ecstasy of the fifth movement and the lovers' sleep in the sixth movement, a flawless working out and fulfillment of the love thereafter in the remainder of the symphony might reasonably be expected. But the seventh movement brings a crisis and a descent into terror, perhaps on one level signifying the punishment which the conscience wreaks on one who has stolen a few moments of forbidden pleasure. The same kind of painful reaction in the wake of an idyllic experience was noted in "Montagnes," Song III of Harawi, in which the blackness of the abyss was encountered immediately following the beautiful expression of love in "Bonjour toi, colombe verte" (Song II).

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[9] *Ibid.*

Perhaps Messiaen is not comfortable with having to deal with terror again at this point in the symphony. David Drew had criticized the seventh movement and has suggested that its melodies and rhythms "lack the breath of imaginative life which might have made the movement a worthy successor to the Jardin du sommeil."[10] It apparently is, however, necessary for Messiaen to reproduce once again the pattern that he had previously set forth in Harawi, as noted above. Joy can be experienced only in exchange for some negative feelings which inevitably follow.

Messiaen compares the mood of "Turangalîla 2" to Edgar Allan Poe's frightening story "The Pit and the Pendulum." In this story, a prisoner of the Inquisition is placed in a darkened dungeon. Pacing around the dungeon's perimeters, he discovers a pit in which exist nameless horrors prepared for him if he should tumble into it. Later, the prisoner awakens to find himself tied up and is even more horrified to discover an inexorably descending pendulum from which is suspended a crescent-shaped scimitar poised to cut into the man's heart. Through quick thinking, he manages to have the rats gnaw away his bonds and hence to evade the blade. Only then does he note that the walls of his dungeon are becoming hot and are closing in on him, thus giving him the choice of being roasted or of falling into the pit:

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[10] Drew, pt. III, p. 55.

> In an instant the apartment had shifted its form into that of a lozenge. But the alteration stopped not here--I neither hoped nor desired it to stop. I could have clasped the red walls to my bosom as a garment of eternal peace. "Death," I said, "any death but that of the pit!" Fool! might I have not known that *into the pit* it was the object of the burning iron to uge me? Could I resist its glow? or, if even that, could I withstand its pressure? And now, flatter and flatter grew the lozenge, with a rapidity that left me no time for contemplation. Its centre, and of course, its greatest width, came just over the yawning gulf. I shrank back--but the closing walls pressed me resistlessly onward. At length for my seared and writhing body there was no longer an inch of foothold on the firm floor of the prison. I struggled no more, but the agony of my soul found vent in one loud, long, and final scream of despair. I felt that I tottered upon the brink....[11]

Even though the story ends with the prisoner being rescued, the fright and terror, not the happy ending, are the impressions which are left most indelibly on the reader's mind.

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[11] Edgar Allen Poe, *The Complete Works*, ed. James A. Harrison (1902; rpt. New York: AMS Press, 1965), V, 86.

For such a crisis of the spirit, Messiaen chooses two musical devices that function as objective correlatives to express strongly felt emotion: "A 'fan' that closes," and a "terrifying rhythm,"[12] played by the percussion instruments. The fan is created by the Ondes Martenot descending from above and the trombones ascending from below. Messiaen says, "The voice of the Ondes is tender and expressive, descending, full of pity, into the depths." On the other hand, he compares the trombones to "monstrous dinosaurs,"[13] which must represent for him the primitive and bestial elements in man--something to be feared and yet a necessary evil with which he must come to terms. The picture of the huge beasts in their unthinking movements able to destroy all before them, and in the end becoming extinct themselves, is terrifying. Messiaen seems very exacting in his choice of the words "pity" and "terrifying"; he must be aware of Aristotle's dictum regarding the value of pity and terror or fear for true catharsis in tragedy.

The overall plan for the movement includes an introduction consisting of a piano solo, the first appearance of the "fan," and the "terrifying rhythm" of the percussion. The body of the movement presents alternating passages of the "fan," which has simultaneously accompanying it what Leonard Burkat calls "a melody of timbres,"[14] and a melodic interlude with instrumental solos and bird songs. The piano solo is brought back near the close of the movement, and, following this, a reminiscence motto of the statue theme is heard. The conclusion consists of the final appearance of the "fan," with both direct and retrograde versions of the "melody of timbres."

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[12] Messiaen's record jacket notes for Turangalîla-Symphonie.

[13] Ibid.

The piano solo begins the movement--a practice unusual even for Messiaen. The opening motif outlines the interval of a minor third (b♮' to d♮''), then, by traversing through four grace notes, it alights on the minor sixth above d♮'', which is b^{b}''. The use of both a b♮ and a b^{b} destroys any possibility that a tonal center might be developed; thus we are reminded of the atonal chirping sounds of the bird song passages previously encountered. Much of the solo has the reiterated high notes preceded by grace notes which we also associate with bird songs. The ragavardhana rhythm appears late in the piano solo. The section is closed by three cluster chords. The entire solo has been fast and fortissimo with brilliantly hammered sounds. It seems, however, to lack something of the flowing manner associated with the regular cadenzas.

The first appearance of the "fan" in this movement is made with the Ondes Martenot descending from on high by means of half steps. The trombones ascend from the depths by chromatic seconds in the first two trombones, and in the third trombone and tuba by intervals which create a kind of modulation by half-step from one tonal center to another. For example, one such modulation moves from an A-C# third to a G#-D diminished fifth to a G-E^b minor sixth. The deep chords in the trombones and tubas advance slowly up the scale, and the analogy with the dinosaurs is recalled, just as the term "pity" is recalled for the descent of the Ondes Martenot. Simultaneously with the "fan" is heard the "melody of timbres," characterized by tones tossed from one instrument to another to create a kind of hocket.

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[14] Burkat, p. 265.

Next the "terrifying rhythm" is heard through fifteen measures of percussion sounds, which utilize six percussion instruments. The durations are arranged once again in patterns of grouped sixteenth note values, with the triangle playing a pattern of four durations, as follows: fifteen units of sixteenth notes, thirteen units, three units, and four units. The maracas take this same pattern and retrograde it. The pattern of the woodblocks (forward) and the bass drum (retrograde) is, in sixteenth note durations, as follows: twelve, fourteen, one, two, seven, eight, and sixteen units. (To be sure, there is a slight variation at one point in the pattern: instead of a single sixteenth note unit followed by a group of two, there are three single sixteenth note units.) Finally, the Turkish cymbal and the Chinese cymbal are paired in a pattern of forward and retrograde durations as follows: five, six, nine, eleven, and ten units of sixteenth notes (Turangalîla-Symphonie, p. 226, ms. 2-8, and p. 267, ms. 1-8, percussion only). Each of the percussion instruments has an individual sound so that some sense of the various patterns is conveyed, especially in the distinctively heavy beats of the bass drum. There is a kind of inexorability about the rhythms: they are tightly knit in a mathematical formula and yet are heard at what are aurally unpredictable intervals; hence the listener is given the feeling of uncertainly and even apprehension, for he cannot anticipate precisely when the next sound will be heard. These are the sounds that Messiaen associates with Poe's "The Pit and the Pendulum."

Following the "terrifying rhythm," a section is given over to the first of the melodic interludes which alternate with the "fan" sections. Here two flutes play in alternation a melody of dissonant intervals (e.g., an augmented fourth followed by an augmented octave), an oboe solo provides another melody of the same sort, while the piano solo utilizes bird song style with fast dissonant intervals which especially exploit sevenths and tritones. Toward the close of the section, the piano plays a long litany consisting only of tritones on a descending D to A^b interval. Then another "fan" is heard, this time with the Ondes ascending, the trombones descending, and the "melody of timbres" also in retrogression. To the listener who knows the code, the same effect of fear and pity is conveyed.

The above sections are followed by one more melodic interlude, in this instance with the piano accompanying the woodwind melodies in a canon of three superposed chords in a pattern of seventeen rhythms. The left hand chords are perfect fourths combined with an augmented fourth built on the same tone; the right hand chords are major or minor triads with added dissonant seconds. This is the passage referred to as the fourth, or wholly chordal, theme.

The beginning of the piano solo returns, and the piano then is joined by woodwinds, which perform a high trill as a prelude to the return of the statue theme--a trill comparable to the trill in the strings that introduces the statue theme in the first movement. Now, in the seventh movement, the statue theme is heard in its original form, but only for a single time. The statue theme is followed by a fragment from the same melodic passage played earlier by the flutes and clarinets. A tremendous long sweep down the piano keyboard is made, with the right hand playing enchaining five-note clusters on adjacent keys and the left hand playing a single black note in a descending pattern in alternation with each right hand cluster chord.

The "fan," this time with the Ondes Martenot descending and the trombones ascending and with the "melody of timbres" in both direct and retrograde forms, brings to a close the movement, which is capped by three cluster chords in the piano and a final terrifying bass drum beat.

VII. "DÉVELOPPEMENT DE L'AMOUR"

Concerning the eighth movement, entitled "Développement de l'amour" ("Development of Love"), the composer remarks:

> This awful title may be understood in two ways.
>
> What does one think of immediately? Of lovers who

> can never be separated, like Tristan and Isolde. The love potion has joined them forever. But this passion, growing steadily into infinity, is not the only significance of the title. It also refers to the musical development. In a work of ten movements, partial developments were not enough. What was needed was a piece that was development: this is it.[15]

Here the tragic aspect of the Tristan and Isolde story is transcended: terror and pity are now almost entirely left behind. These are now "lovers who can never be separated" and whose love grows "steadily into infinity." True lovers are united not only physically but also spiritually. As in the traditional Western marriage ceremony, the pair to be wed are said to become "one flesh," so Friedrich Schlegel is said to have seen the goal of the entire human race to be "a progressive reintegration of the sexes" with the end result being the androgynous person.[16] And the Romantic writer Franz von Baadem saw the union of two lovers in much the same way: he thought that "sexual love should not be confused with the instinct for reproduction; its true function is 'to help man and woman to integrate internally the complete human image, that is to say the divine and original image.'"[17] Messiaen seems to see the expression and development of love by his lovers similarly as spiritual union which not only unites two lovers but also brings them into contact with the divine.

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[15] Messiaen's record jacket notes for *Turangalîla-Symphonie*.

[16] Friedrich Schlegel, *Über die Diotima*, as quoted in Mircea Eliade, *The Two and the One*, trans. J. M. Cohen (New York: Harper and Row, 1965), p. 101.

[17] Quoted in Eliade, *Two and the One*, p. 102.

However, the movement signifies not only the development of human and divine love, but also that of musical development as well. Here the analogy between phenomenological truths and musical truths is clearly drawn by the composer. Love and music are alike in that each is capable of being developed. Curiously, the musical development does not depend so much on conventional techniques usually associated with the musical development, but depends more on a kind of flat repetition. Instead of fragmentation, inversion, retrogression, or modulation into foreign keys, Messiaen seems content to present the themes much as they were heard in earlier movements. The familiar flower theme appears just as it was heard before, the statue theme is present in both original and canonic form, and the theme of love in two of its manifestations is prominent. The enchaining chords which were so much a part of the previous movements now have a new importance. Indeed, here Messiaen considers them to have thematic significance. Also present is soloistic material for piano alone, although it here is much truncated.

From the standpoint of structure, Messiaen's development contains an introduction, a double development, and an epilogue.

The introduction consists of a five-note motif of bell sounds, juxtaposed with the chordal theme in the piano (Appendix, example

45). The motif in the bells is a linear form of the statue theme. The chords are Messiaen's superposed fourths, fifths, and seconds; there are four chords, used over and over in a litany effect, each of which can be analyzed as part of a different mode. (The chords fall within, respectively, Modes 4, 7, 6, and 2.) The piano continues to expand on the chordal theme with ninth chords built on descending adjacent whole tones. There is a brief piano solo, marked near the close by a long, low trill which leads to a passage dominated by the statue theme in the clarinets, bassoons, horns, trombones, and tubas. The piano accompanies the statue in seconds.

Now begins the first development, which has the themes in the following order: chordal theme, theme of love as presented in the sixth movement, and the flower theme. The first development is made up of two appearances of the three themes in this order, a central announcement of the theme of love using elements of its appearance in the second and sixth movements, and then two more appearances of the chordal, love, and flower theme series, completed by one more chordal section.

Messiaen's use of the theme of love now illuminates its previous appearance and gives more evidence for the relatedness of the various appearances of the theme. While at times it has seemed almost necessary to take the relatedness of the various manifestations of the theme on faith--i.e., on the basis of Messiaen's own testimony--now the intervallic relationships become clear. In the chain of chordal, love, and flower themes in the first development, the theme of love here is directly related to its manifestation in the sixth movement (Appendix, example 46). The only differences between the two appearances are those of key and instrumentation, the Ondes Martenot being omitted temporarily from the theme of love in the eighth movement.

What I have called the central announcement of the theme of love is a reworking of elements found in the sixth movement as well as in the second movement. Here the constant elements seem to be the intervals of major and minor seconds, with the rising major second and the falling minor second present in the eighth movement and the directions reversed in the sixth movement, where there are found two falling minor seconds, a rising major second, and another falling major second. In the second movement, there are sinuous patterns of rising and falling major and minor seconds in both question and answer portions. The answer ends with the familiar interval of the falling minor second (Appendix, example 47). This central announcement of the theme of love is in the key of C major, and the tonality gives a kind of controlling thread to the sea of atonality and modality surrounding it.

The second development begins with what was the central announcement of the theme of love in the first development, discussed above. What marks this as a new section is the fact that the theme is now given out in the key of D major rather than in its previous key of C major. Following this announcement, nothing but chords and arpeggios are heard. No further use is made of either the flower theme or the theme of love until near the end of the second development, when the theme of love is heard. The chords and arpeggios are marked *avec passion*, *charnel et terrible*. This is another reminder that the pangs of conscience are still present, and that passion, especially when it is manifested as a physical one, is terrible and even terrifying.

As noted above, near the close of the second development the theme of love appears for the last time, and its appearance is in the form found at the center of the first development and at the beginning of the second development. Now it is very much slower both in tempo and in the duration of its first tone. It is also expanded to include more of the material from the sixth movement.

Furious chords follow, and then the bells once again announce their five-note motif derived from the statue theme, heard at the beginning of the movement. This motif now reveals itself to be the first part of a three-part canon on the statue theme. The other two parts soon appear in, first, the trombones (with tuba), and then the trumpets, joined by the second and fourth horns (*Turangalîla-Symphonie*, p. 335, ms. 1-4; p. 336, ms. 1-4; and p. 337, ms. 1-4, bells only). The piano plays the four-chord theme from the beginning of the movement in juxtaposition with the canonic statue; neither are disrupted by the high-pitched vibrato of the Ondes Martenot.

The epilogue which closes the movement consists of a repetition of the brief piano solo heard earlier in the movement, a three-note motif from the original statue theme, and a decresendoing roll from the tam-tam and the kettledrum. Of these last sounds in the movement, Messiaen has said: "The last stroke of the tam-tam vibrates in the echoes of oracular grottos--echoes of languages of the Beyond reach us, and the 'statue' theme leans over the abyss."[18] We may be reminded of the grotto in which Tristan and Isolde meet in the medieval versions of the Tristan story, and also of the grotto in which Pelléas and Mélisande meet in the Debussy-Maeterlinck opera. The transcendental nature of the love of the two lovers in Turangalîla-Symphonie is once again emphasized, for it is a love that reaches beyond the ordinary earthly state and becomes allied with the cosmic order itself.

But more important than the "oracular grottos" is the "statue," which "leans over the abyss" at the end of the movement. For Messiaen the abyss can be many things, as we have noted. In "Les mains des Abîmes" in Livre d'Orgue it represents both human misery and divine grace. The abyss in "Montagnes" (Song III of Harawi) is black despair and a feeling of uselessness (inutile). In the Quartet for the End of Time, Messiaen refers to the "abyss of Time, with its sadness, its lassitude." What makes time sad is that it marks one's progress through life and inevitably toward death.[19]

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[18] Messiaen's record jacket notes for Turangalîla-Symphonie.

[19] In an essay entitled "Time and the Destiny of Man, S. G. F.

Time is also a figure of conscience, a relentless master.[20] It is likely that Messiaen is primarily thinking of the abyss in terms of *time*, since *Turangalîla-Symphonie* itself is a "time-play." Yet Messiaen may want us to descend even further into the abyss of the unconscious, where both frightening and illuminating truths are stored. When the terrifying statue looks down into the abyss, confronting a conscience beyond itself, a transcendental Time, and an unconscious replete with memories and feelings ordinarily avoided, the statue itself loses its menacing aspects. After this point in the symphony, the terrifying statue theme does not return: only a transformed statue theme reappears in the final movement to give the symphony a joyful closing.

David Drew, one of the most astute of Messiaen's critics, has also faulted this movement along with the seventh for lack of invention. Yet it would appear that this rather problematical movement has something important to say about Messiaen's method. First, in its title he flatly creates the metaphor which links the development of love with the musical development. And by using a kind of repetition without change, he is saying that both kinds of development do not necessarily depend on ingenious techniques

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Brandon has succinctly expressed the meaning and the pain of time: "the knowledge of birth and death invests the life of each individual with a temporal significance that is basic, and it ultimately affects the evaluation of all experience"--*The Voices of Time*, ed. J. T. Fraser (New York: George Braziller, 1966), p. 143.

[20] See Joost A. M. Meerloo, "The Time Sense in Psychiatry," in *Voices of Time*, p. 251.

involving many changes, but that both love and music can grow through a simple statement and repetitions of that statement.

Second, in the conscious choice of order in which he uses the themes--the statue with its implications of terror, the chord theme with its heaviness, the theme of love with its sweetness, and the flower theme with its delicacy--he has created a meaning which is different from any one of the elements alone. They have meaning in their order and in their accumulation. Susanne Langer speaks of the "inviolable whole" of a musical piece,[21] and such wholeness is what Messiaen achieves by his wonderfully precise ordering of parts.

Third, this movement more than any other illuminates and intensifies the theme of love. This theme as manifested here makes clear its linkage with earlier appearances of the same generic material, the ascending major second, the descending minor second and their inversions being the distinctive characteristics by which it is marked. The repetition of the theme (heard before in the second, fourth, and sixth movements) marks its importance and raises it to a new level of intensity for the listener.

Finally, the movement has an important function in setting to rest the menace of the statue theme, for it never again appears in its terrifying original form. When we again encounter the statue theme in the final movement, it has been transformed into a light, joyful theme, without the heaviness of the original theme which Messiaen had associated with fear and terror.

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[21] Susanne K. Langer, Feeling and Form (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1953), p. 147.

IX. "TURANGALÎLA 3"

The ninth movement, entitled "Turangalîla 3," returns to the formalism of the third movement, "Turangalîla 1," with its soft dynamics, calm motion, and transparent texture. David Drew remarks that, "if anything, the sounds are more glacial" than those of the first Turangalîla.[22] Even Messiaen speaks of it as a "strange piece."[23]

The theme is extremely lucid. The first or main portion outlines a descending major seventh, an ascending augmented fourth, an ascending major second, an ascending diminished fifth, a descending minor third, an ascending major second, and a descending ninth to an acciacatura which moves up to the closing note of the series by means of an ascending major second. The final tone in the series is, like the second, an E^b. The repetition of the E^b helps to give the theme a sense of direction and unity. The theme is begun by the clarinet, and the oboe provides the acciacatura and the final note (Appendix, example 48). The "answer" for this "question" seems to be a five-note motif which is much concerned with both descending and ascending tritones. The clarinet, trumpet, and bells play this part of the theme (Appendix, example 49). These two motifs are repeated, and new material appears, played by Ondes, clarinet, and flute, in which the tritone again is a most common interval (*Turangalîla-Symphonie*, p. 341, ms. 9-12, Ondes Martenot, flute, and clarinet). The "closing" portion of the theme is a descending passage for clarinet alone, again with three tritones within the passage (Appendix, example 50).

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[22] Drew, pt. III, p. 55.

[23] Messiaen's record jacket notes for Turangalîla-Symphonie.

Comparing this thematic material with the themes from "Turangalîla 1" and "Turangalîla 2," we find that only one interval--the descending major seventh (part of the first theme, and shown in example 48)--is identical, and that otherwise there are no similarities in intervallic relationships. Thus there is no possibility of the theme from "Turangalîla 3" being a retrogression or an inversion of material from either of the earlier movements. But strangely, the sounds of the themes of the first and third Turangalîla are not unlike; hence a feeling of *déjà vu* comes over the listener upon hearing the third Turangalîla. One identical interval is not enough, of course, to identify the two themes as related in any way. What gives the two themes (and thus the two movements) their affinity for one another are the contours of the two themes, both moving through fairly wide dissonant intervals. Further, beyond mere thematic affinity is the feeling of calm and control; even when, in the latter part of "Turangalîla 3," the texture does get slightly thicker, it never passes beyond the capability of the ear to perceive individual instruments and melodic lines. However, "Turangalîla 2" escapes this kind of affinity because of its heavy "fan" which dominates it and because the other thematic material is so much fragmented among various instruments as to lose its continuity as theme. Further, the entire "Turangalîla 2" is louder, faster, and busier than either of the other two.

Messiaen does not explain what ideational content he has in mind for this movement. Since it follows the development of love, we are left to surmise that this movement continues to work out the fulfillment of the love which was consummated in the fifth movement. Further, since this movement is once again rich in formal devices, we may also see it as being linked with those movements in which ingenious rhythmic and thematic changes are being attempted by the composer--in particular, the first, third, and seventh movements.

The rhythmic scheme which continues throughout the movement is carried out by woodblocks, suspended cymbal, maracas, Provençal cymbal, tam-tam, and bells, and is first announced in direct manner by the woodblocks. There are fifteen durations of sixteenth-note values[24] as follows: 4-5-7-3-2-1-6-17-14-8-9-10-16-12-15. Once the original set of fifteen durations has been presented, the woodblocks continue to exploit the same scheme, with additions. On the second time through the scheme in the woodblocks, the duration of one sixteenth note unit is added between each of the durations. The next time two sixteenth notes are added, and on the third there is a five-unit trill inserted between each of the durations. The Provençal tambourine utilizes the first nine durations of eleven and thirteen units of sixteenth-note values several times before returning to the partial retrograde pattern from the woodblocks. On its return to the pattern, the duration of one sixteenth note is inserted between the elements of the pattern. The suspended cymbal repeats the eleven-thirteen pattern before picking up the nine durations in retrograde form from the pattern used by the Provençal tambourine. The patterns are, however, staggered between the cymbal and the Provençal tambourine.

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[24] Cf. Burkat, p. 266, who includes two durations (11 and 13) found only in two of the lines; hence his tabulation is 17 durations.

The maracas use the last six numbers of the woodblock pattern (8-9-10-16-12-15) in retrograde form. On the next time through the pattern, one sixteenth-note value is inserted between each of the durations. Two sixteenth notes are added between each duration when the pattern is next presented. The tam-tam uses the last six durations in direct manner, adding to these the first nine durations also in direct manner: 8-9-10-16-12-15-4-5-7-3-2-1-6-17-14.

At the same time these rhythmic schemes are occurring, some changes are also being made in the melodic theme, although these are perhaps not on the level of complexity of the rhythmic changes. The theme is first fragmented and made into an ostinato (Turangalîla-Symphonie, p. 344, ms. 1-6, and p. 345, ms. 1-5, clarinet and bassoon only). At the same time, the Ondes Martenot augments the theme irregularly (p. 348, ms. 1-4, Ondes Martenot only).

In the gamelan, the theme is presented in equal eighth note values (p. 348, ms. 1-4, celesta, bells and vibraphone). Near the end of the movement, the most audibly noticeable transformation of the theme occurs: here the theme is given out by flute and piccolo in repeated sixteenth notes, thus intensifying the effect of the theme (p. 358, ms. 1-4, flute and piccolo).

As part of the luminescent tapestry of the ninth movement, each one of the five string parts is given its own modus operandi--i.e., each is given one of the modes of limited transposition. The first violins operate within Mode 3 (W $\frac{1}{2}$ $\frac{1}{2}$ W $\frac{1}{2}$ $\frac{1}{2}$ W $\frac{1}{2}$ $\frac{1}{2}$); the second violins within Mode 2 ($\frac{1}{2}$ W $\frac{1}{2}$ W $\frac{1}{2}$ W $\frac{1}{2}$ W); the violas within Mode 6 (W W $\frac{1}{2}$ $\frac{1}{2}$ W W $\frac{1}{2}$ $\frac{1}{2}$); the violoncellos within Mode 4 ($\frac{1}{2}$ $\frac{1}{2}$ $1\frac{1}{2}$ $\frac{1}{2}$ $\frac{1}{2}$ $\frac{1}{2}$ $1\frac{1}{2}$ $\frac{1}{2}$); and the contrabasses within Mode 1 (the whole-tone scale). In addition, each of the five string parts is paired with one of the rhythmic "modes" played by the five percussion instruments. The first violins line up with the woodblocks, the second violins with the cymbal, the violas with the maracas, the violoncellos with the Provençal tambourine, and the contrabasses with the tam-tam.[25] The overall effect, rather than that of confusion, is one of clarity and extreme order.

X. "FINAL"

The last movement, "Final" ("Finale"), presents the solution to the entire symphony, for here the formerly terrifying statue theme is at last set forth in its transformation into a theme of joy. A partial solution had been presented in the fifth movement when the love of the two lovers was consummated and they transcended time and earthly being; then, in the final portion of the symphony, the fulfillment of that love has been worked out, sometimes with fear and trembling because of the proximity of the menacing "statue," which in part has represented conscience. Now, in the last movement, both the problems associated with the emotional content of the mythic structure as well as musical problems are resolved, and nothing remains but the "statue," minus its menacing aspects, along with the overriding theme of love. Thus the symphony is brought to a successful close.

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[25] See ibid., p. 267.

The one theme which pervades nearly the entire movement is the completely transformed statue theme. In the other movements in which the original statue theme appeared (Movements I, IV, VI, and VIII), the "statue" had been slow, ponderous, and loud; but like the variation of the statue theme in the fifth movement, the transformed "statue" is fast, light, and yet fairly loud. The theme as well as the entire movement now conveys a brighter mood. We recall the statue theme in its original form as it appeared in the first movement (see Appendix, example 27), and as it appeared in the fifth movement (Appendix, example 51). Now, it would seem that the original statue theme is turned upside down. Instead of plodding slowly from one low vertical third to a higher one, traversing through a different key center for each third alighted on, the thirds now stay for a large part within the tonal center of F# major; furthermore, they encompass a smaller ambitus, and they proceed in the opposite direction from the earliest statue theme. In addition, they utilize heavily the tonic chord of F# major, rocking back and forth along that chord. The end of the phrase consists of three reiterated thirds, in sixteenth note values, which serve to close the theme.

The rhythms are long-short, long-short, short-long, giving the theme an alternately trochaic and iambic bounciness which it has not had in its previous appearances. The choice of pairs of longs and shorts may look back to Messiaen's experiments with Greek rhythms, begun under Marcel Dupré and Maurice Emmanuel.[26]

Again Messiaen's structure in the movement is clear, if slightly unconventional. It consists of two almost identical periods in which the theme, first presented in F# major, then moves out to various keys, another shorter period in which the theme is more fragmented, and an almost conventional recapitulation followed by a period dominated by the theme of love. A kind of coda, in which the Ondes Martenot trills over the other voices of the orchestra, closes the movement.

The first period begins with the transformed "statue" in F# major, mainly outlining the tonic especially at the beginning and end of the theme (Appendix, example 52). The statue theme appears thus twice, then moves to outline the subdominant chord and then to a chord built on the dominant of the scale but more outlining fourths than tertiary harmonies. The keys through which the theme traverses following its opening in F# major include E^b major, G major (here the theme is in the French horns), A^b major, and an ambiguous region made up of A major and a minor (*Turangalîla-Symphonie*, p. 381, ms. 1-4, French horns, only). What marks the close of the first period is a long-held dissonant chord. The chord essentially is made up of six tones: C, D, G# (A^b), A , A#, (B^b), and B♮. The chord is distributed among the various instruments as well as among several octaves to make it sound thicker than it actually is. Nevertheless, it is the presence of the adjacent seconds, not mere doubling, which is responsible for the dissonance in the chord. Ending the period on a chord such as this--long-held, dissonant, and triple *forte*--gives the period a feeling of closure, even finality.

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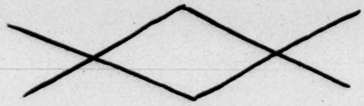
[26] See Samuel, pp. 75, 77.

However, the piece moves on, by means of a bridge of heavy strumming chords, to the next period. This is similar to the last period except for the keys F, A^b, B^b, D, B, and C, through which the theme goes. The period ends with another dissonant chord, this time containing eight of the twelve tones of the chromatic scale.

A slightly shorter period follows in which the theme is fragmented or, in Messiaen's words, "developed by elimination." The ending formula of the theme, with its three reiterated sixteenth notes the last of which is tied to a dotted eighth note, is what is most noticeable (Appendix, example 53). Heavy octaves in the piano and equally heavy drum beats punctuate the thematic fragmentations. Toward the close of this section, the bassoons stand out in a soloistic passage of ascending thirds and seconds in a rhythm of alternating eighths and sixteenths, against a background of vertical fifths C#-G#, reiterated in sixteenth notes by the violins and violas. The violoncellos and contrabasses ascend by thirds and seconds, only at a faster rate (i.e., by sixteenth-note values) than the solo bassoon passage (Turangalîla-Symphonie, p. 402, ms. 1-10, full score). All the instruments except the piano drop out, and it is left alone, playing repeated octave sixteenth notes on a c# to form a bridge to the recapitulation.

In the recapitulation, the theme, played by flutes, clarinets, and trumpets, stays in F# major just as in a traditional recapitulation. Piano and strings double one another in parallel chords, ascending by whole and half steps (Turangalîla-Symphonie, p. 405, ms. 1-9, piano, Ondes Martenot, and strings). The Ondes Martenot and strings carry fragments of the theme, while other instruments punctuate the texture with sharp chords in F# major. There is a gigantic double "fan" created by the woodwinds and strings first ascending and then descending, and at the same time the gamelan proceeding in the opposite direction, thus (Turangalîla-Symphonie, p. 420, schematic drawing of ms. 1-8):



The fan leads into the most insistent presentation thus far of the theme of love, a variant of the one found in the sixth movement (*Turangalîla-Symphonie*, p. 421, ms. 1-7, woodwinds, brass, and Ondes Martenot). The tremendous energy built up in the movement seems to have no possible ending to it, with its constant reiteration of transformed theme and fragmentations of that theme. Even bringing back the theme of love near the close of the movement cannot slow the juggernaut. Once again Messiaen has the problem of ending a crucial movement, and in this instance he must also bring the entire symphony to an effective close. His solution is to have the Ondes Martenot cut through the musical tapestry of the leaping thematic material with two closing formulas. The first one is short ~~and~~ outlines ascending tones both in and out of the key of F# major (*Turangalîla-Symphonie*, p. 426, ms. 4-9, Ondes Martenot only). The second formula outlines only tones in the tonic triad, ascending inexorably to A#'''. This is followed by the long-held (five measures in all) tonic chord in F# that is the last sound heard in the symphony. The chord begins *piano* and crescendos to a triple *forte*. The fermata and the marking *très long* give some idea of the length Messiaen desires for this chord; these markings also reveal his conviction that this symphony, like the symphonies of Beethoven, must have an ending decisive and grand enough effectively to bring such a massive work to a close.

In spite of the fact that Turangalîla-Symphonie is not the final work in Messiaen's Tristan trilogy, some conclusions regarding this work must be made. Although the composition is linked to the other two works, the symphony itself raises questions independently of Harawi and Cinq Rechants. The salient questions seem to be those of structure and meaning.

The structure is admittedly gigantic. Even though Mahler's Eighth Symphony exceeds Turangalîla-Symphonie in length and in numbers of forces (vocal as well as instrumental), and even though Beethoven and Bruckner have exceeded its length in their ninth and eighth symphonies respectively, Messiaen's work nevertheless seems unusual among strictly twentieth-century compositions. It is unusual not merely for its length but also for its ten-movement structure, which is uniquely conceived in relation to a mythic armature--the Tristan story.

I believe that it can be shown that each of the ten movements is a necessary link in the symphonic structure, and that together they fulfill a need for contrast and wholeness. Contrast is rather obviously demonstrated through recognition that for the first half of the symphony the movements are alternately of the loud and fast type or of the soft and slow variety. In the second half of the symphony, the exact alternation of loud and fast movements with soft and slow breaks down, since both the seventh and eighth movements are loud and fast. However, the groupings of soft-slow, loud-fast, loud-fast, soft-slow, and loud-fast brings us to an exciting close for the symphony, and balances off the ending of its first half with a concomitant ending for the second half.

Less obviously, contrast in the work also includes carefully constructed tonal realtionships from movement to movement within the work. Messiaen keeps the fifth, sixth, eighth, and tenth movements essentially within the framework of an F# major tonal center. These movements carry much of the ideational content and make important contributions structurally. The other movements, either atonal or made up of a combination of tonal and atonal passages, generally have less to do with the mythic matrix and serve more as foils for the tonal portions.

It is possible to see how each movement makes its own specific contribution to the structure of the symphony. For example, each of the movements entitled "Chant d'amour" provides new technical problems, and each contains its own solutions. The refrain and couplet of "Chant d'amour 1" give Messiaen a chance to explore a form derived from early music and to bring this influence into a modern musical work. Also in this movement, the overwhelming theme of love is introduced, presenting for the listener the germ out of which will grow the variations on the theme that will appear later. "Chant d'amour 2," on the other hand, explores nine unusual formal designs under the guise of scherzo and trio form. Both movements are important elements in the prelude which leads to the orgiastic fifth movement.

The presence of three movements entitled "Turangalîla" may also be defended. We found the first and third to be a perfect pair--calm, cool, contemplative, and thus justifiable as balancing points for one another in each half of the symphony. "Turangalîla 2" differs from the other two, and it might well be wondered how the movement fits the structure of the symphony as a whole. Here, however, it seems to me that the movement is important because it functions to bring the listener back to harsh reality after the perfection of the "Garden of Love's Sleep." This movement exploits the "fan" to its greatest extent, which (along with the "terrifying rhythm" and the association with the frightening Poe tale) serves to break the idyllic mood of the sixth movement.

Movements V and VI most obviously justify themselves with the structure of the symphony. The fifth movement is of such importance that Messiaen, who really does not want any part of the symphony performed separately, nevertheless would allow this one movement to be played by itself.[27] The celebration of love by the lovers is the culminating point of the first half of the symphony. The new statue theme is given bouyant treatment and the original "statue" is rhythmically transformed for the first time so that its terror is temporarily mitigated. The "Jardin du sommeil d'amour" may be the most successful of movements, being possessed of an imperturbable calm, a nicely constructed theme which well deserves the appellation "beautiful," and an absence of mathematical complications.

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[27] See the Note on the page facing p. 1 of *Turangalîla-Symphonie* (Paris: Durand, 1953).

For Messiaen, the eighth movement constitutes the development of the whole symphony. As such, it shows his attitudes toward and his techniques of handling the development as a musical entity, since here he develops mainly by repetition and elimination.

The final movement is not so much a repetition of the fifth movement as it is a final solution to the partial solution which the earlier movement had presented. Just as in the Harawi cycle the cosmic dance of the lovers did not provide the final solution, neither does the cosmic dance of the fifth movement complete the Turangalîla-Symphonie. The leaping theme, moving in and out of the tonality, is completed by the more solidly tonal and less violently leaping theme of the tenth movement.

But as has been suggested above, it is in the total structure that the work has its coherence. On reflection, nothing can be eliminated, and each movement leads inexorably to a statement that has wholeness and harmony in and of itself as well as within the trilogy as a larger entity.

The question of the structure of the symphony is inextricably tied to its meaning, especially since it is Messiaen's intention to engage in the structural analysis of myth. But how does he join his mythic armature--the literary figures of Tristan and Isolde, especially as linked to Romeo and Juliet, Ligeia, the Venus d'Ille, and Breton's heroine in "L'Union Libre," in addition to the visual imagery from nature such as fruit, flowers, birds--to his musical material? First, Messiaen chooses a certain number of themes, including the familiar "statue," flower theme, and the theme of love which he clearly identifies; once the listener is apprised of the code he is able to make the associations the composer has invested in the material. But is there something intrinsic in these themes which can express ideas such as terror in the statue theme, joy and pain in the theme of love, or the color and scent of flowers? For the elements that Messiaen is attempting to portray, he chooses musical correlatives consistent with such elements. In the case of the terrifying "statue," he chooses heavy trombones and a wide-ranging theme in thirds. We have already noted the relationship of the theme with the "statue" of the Commendatore with its implications of doom in Don Giovanni, and with the Coronation music for the guilt-ridden Boris in Mussorgsky's Boris Godunov. At other points where the feeling of terror is again desired by the composer, a "terrifying rhythm" is chosen which has a horrible uncertainty and an equally dreadful certainty within its pattern. For the flower theme, music of great delicacy is chosen, and for the theme of love both sweetness and torment are suggested by the constant weaving in and out of the tonal center by the high-pitched, insistent voice of Ondes Martenot. Messiaen chooses musical material out of which, using his mythic armature, he effectively creates a work which is like an additive sculpture of gigantic proportions. The result is also identifiable as a structural analysis of the Tristan myth which does for our century what Wagner's analysis of myth in music did for the nineteenth. *Turangalîla-Symphonie* is a modern work which has affinities with such developments as synthetic cubism and Surrealism in art, but in a sense its value is predicated on its ability to reach back to ancient forms and mythic structures. If Claude Lévi-Strauss is correct in his belief that we listen to ourselves through music,[28] hearing *Turangalîla-Symphonie* is for the listener a reintegrative experience.

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[28] Lévi-Strauss, *Raw and the Cooked*, p. 17.

OLIVIER MESSIAEN'S TRISTAN TRILOGY: TIME AND TRANSCENDENCE

A THESIS
SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF THE GRADUATE SCHOOL
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Audrey Jean Ekdahl Davidson

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CHAPTER VII

CINQ RECHANTS:

"YOUR EYES VOYAGING IN THE PAST...IN THE FUTURE"

The third and final part of Messiaen's Tristan trilogy consists of five *rechants* (refrains) for unaccompanied chorus of mixed voices. *Cinq Rechants*, which thus completes the composer's work on the theme of love as experienced by Tristan and Isolde, is characterized by tremendous speed, with many sections being marked *Presque vif* or *Vif, gai*. The composition is fairly short--approximately twenty minutes in length--and hence is the shortest by far of the three works included in the trilogy. Thus the Tristan trilogy as a whole is like an art nouveau triptych (if such a thing could be imagined) in which *Turangalîla-Symphonie* is the central and largest panel, with unequal panels on each side. The function of the first panel, *Harawi*, is to introduce his modern way of handling and analyzing myth in music. The central panel is the broadest in its handling of mythic and musical materials, while the final portion concludes the whole. Using a text which is obscure and at times almost impenetrable, *Cinq Rechants* combines fragmented language with musical texture and form that are extremely integrative. Words and disjunct ideas hence find their place in the unifying musical vision of the composer, who carefully blends together sounds and ideas in a final handling of an archetypal love story.

The form which Messiaen utilizes in *Cinq Rechants* depends largely on the Renaissance form found in Claude le Jeune's *chant-*

rechant alternation in the collection of chansons called Le Printemps. The texture of Cinq Rechants is the most lucid of any of the three works comprising the Tristan trilogy, with long passages of unison writing alternated with sections of two, three, four, or five-part harmony. Only rarely does the texture expand to encompass eight, ten, or twelve parts, which, since Messiaen specifies a chorus consisting of twelve voices, means that in a very few instances there will be one voice to a part. Some spoken vocal effects, such as the letters "t k t k" vocalized to create percussive sounds, are also included, and Messiaen's complex rhythmic patterns are an ever-present reality. Yet, the overall effect is one of shimmering beauty.

If the form and texture are lucid, the poetry is not necessarily so. Although the French words are, for the most part, in common parlance, the syntactic connections are often missing, and the style is one of great disjunctiveness--and, therefore, of great mysteriousness even to one who has fathomed much of the mystery inherent in the sometimes strange and tantalizing text of Harawi. Added to the opaque quality of the French text, the critic encounters the synthetic language which Messiaen has forged from Sanskrit syllables along with pseudo-Sanskrit sounds, creating words which are not accessible to ordinary rules of language. Some meanings can be the subject of speculation, but little certainty is possible. For the freely invented pseudo-Sanskrit language, Messiaen gives the following explanation:

"The syllables are chosen for their softness or their violence of attack, for the aptitude in stressing the musical rhythms. They enable the easy combination of the four orders: phonetic (tone-colour), dynamic (intensities), cinematic (accents), quantitative (duration)."[1] Mellers suggests further that these sounds may imitate "bird, insect, or animal noises."[2] Thus, the problem of deciphering Messiaen's meaning in the five poems which constitute the text for Cinq Rechants is greater than any encountered in explicating the twelve poems of Harawi and infinitely greater than in understanding the composer's programmatic design for the Turangalîla-Symphonie. It almost appears as if Messiaen has, as Pierette Mari suggests, "arrived at an impasse of the inexpressible."[3] Thus he feels impelled to turn to a private language fit for his deepest thoughts and feelings. He adopts the invented Eastern language, and he revives the Surrealism which informed his earlier poetry. However, the poetry in Cinq Rechants at times, as we will see, goes beyond Surrealism in its disjunctiveness and approaches the pastiche quality of Cubist painting and poetry.

Previous chapters have often noted Messiaen's debt to the poetry and paintings of Surrealism--a debt which also is obviously present in this final part of the Tristan trilogy. It is significant that the image of the lovers encapsulated in the crystal ball comes from the work of the painter Hieronymus Bosch, who is the Renaissance painter most admired by the Surrealists.[4] The other painter whose designs echo through the Cinq Rechants in the image of the lovers flying off into space is Marc Chagall, never a strict Surrealist but one whose work, like that of the Surrealists, dwells in the realm of fantasy and the dream world.[5] In the poetry of Cinq Rechants there is again the reconciliation of opposites or even impossibles; for example, one line contains the clashing images of "octopus of light," wounding, trampling, reddening, and "my caress." Here each term collides with the next without connectives. Messiaen's admiration for André Breton has been noted above. Certainly, Breton's statement that "Beauty must be convulsive"[6] neatly characterizes the line from Cinq Rechants cited above with its strange but arresting figures. But from a formalistic standpoint it appears that the most important influence of all upon Messiaen's text may be the work of Pierre Reverdy. Reverdy, whose poetry likewise is characterized by the almost total lack of logical connections, was a reclusive mystic in his lifetime. While he has often been discussed as an example of Surrealism,[7] his poetry could properly be called Cubistic because of the way it is put together, almost after the fashion of a collage or montage. He creates, for example, lines such as the following from "Dead Weight":

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[1] Record jacket notes by Messiaen for Cinq Rechants (Musical Heritage MHS 1187).

[2] Mellers, Caliban Reborn, p. 102.

[3] Mari, p. 50.

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[4] See Sandrow, p. 31.

[5] See Schmalenbach, p. 5.

[6] André Breton, Nadja, as quoted in Balakian, Surrealism: The Road to the Absolute, p. 166.

> Sister limpid sister calm
>
> . . .
>
> Each day the armed perusal of the horizon
> The missing window pane that thrills me[8]

Messiaen's Harawi, of course, had contained a certain amount of disjunctiveness, especially in Song IX in which "De l'eau, du temps, du ciel, l'escalier, du ciel" was simply dropped in elliptically and enigmatically. But now in Cinq Rechants almost every line of the poetry is, like Reverdy's verse, characterized by ellipsis and enigma.

The major mythic material for Cinq Rechants is, of course, once again drawn from the Tristan and Isolde story, and, as might be expected, emphasis is placed on the love-death theme. Messiaen here takes up both incidents and characters from the story. He names Brangäne, the companion of Isolde, in the first line of the first poem. She is the one who had acted as the watchman of the alba or dawn song in Wagner's Tristan und Isolde. Isolde herself appears, here apparently as in Turangalîla-Symphonie implicitly compared with the magician Vivian. Tristan is here as the "oarsman of love" in the fifth refrain; hence we are reminded that it was Tristan who was in charge of ferrying Isolde to Cornwall where she was to be King Mark's bride and during this voyage they fell fatally in love. There is also another voyage which Isolde undergoes when she is drawn to what Messiaen has called Tristan's "wondrous crystal castle" in Brittany.[9] As we might expect, the love philter appears, curiously transformed to "philters," all of which "are drunk this night." Finally there is the flower garden, which had appeared as a flowery bank in Harawi and as the "Garden of Love's Sleep" had formed the inspiration for the entire sixth movement of Turangalîla-Symphonie. Each of these elements, which are only listed here, will be discussed more fully in connection with the analysis of each of the five rechants below. What is important to note at this point is Messiaen's stripping down of all versions of the story to an even smaller ambitus of details, making his poetic rendition even more economical than the text of Wagner's music drama. Yet each individual part of the myth which Messiaen chooses is absolutely essential, for here again it forms the mythic armature around which Cinq Rechants is structured.

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[7] See ibid., pp. 100-20.

[8] Pierre Reverdy, "Dead Weight," trans. Anna Balakian, in Modern European Poetry, ed. Willis Barnstone et al. (New York: Bantam, 1966), p. 25.

At the same time that Messiaen in this composition reduces the Tristan-Isolde myth to its bare essentials, he also enriches it once again through allusions and references to other mythological motifs and literary figures. Vivian has already been mentioned by Messiaen in his program notes for Turangalîla-Symphonie, but now in the framework of the poetry of Cinq Rechants her importance for his understanding of life, love, and death is more fully revealed. Vivian, called so by Tennyson in his Idyls of the King but known as Nimue in Malory's Morte d'Arthur, learned Merlin's secrets by manipulating his love and, becoming herself a magician, turned the secrets against Merlin, whom she encloses under a rock, in a cave, or in a hollow oak. She thus further becomes part of the important network of imagery of enclosures and open spaces, and she also may be connected somehow with the magical powers possessed by Isolde, who has almost miraculous ability to heal.

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[9] Messiaen's record jacket notes for Cinq Rechants (MHS 1187).

Other mythological or literary characters who figure in the poetic imagery of Cinq Rechants come from sources which are further afield. One is the ancient Greek "explorer Orpheus" who "finds his heart in death," while another is Perseus who slays the dread Medusa. Another is the villain Bluebeard, whose last wife, in Maurice Maeterlinck's drama,[10] escapes from the prison of her husband's castle. Maeterlinck's play might have been known to Messiaen through Paul Dukas' operatic version, Ariane et Barbe Bleu, in which the heroine's name contains a hint of that

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[10] See Maurice Maeterlinck, Sister Beatice and Ardiane and Barbe Bleu, trans. Bernard Miall (New York: Dodd, Mead, 1911), pp. 93-183.

Ariadne who solved the riddle of the Minotaur's labyrinth, thus saving her lover, Theseus, who later deserted her. Thus the images of love, death, entrapment, and escape are all underlined by these references.

It will also be noted that the text of Cinq Rechants contains yet further imagery which is not easily identifiable in relation to source or theme. For example, there are the "four lizards." These obscure creatures, however, may involve an allusion to the Bosch triptych, in particular to the left panel, "Earthly Paradise," which contains a number of lizards at the right center. Then there is the curious "octopus of light" or the "octopus with golden tentacles." But even this could possibly be inspired by the same painting by Bosch, who has painted a strange fruit-like object with ivory tentacles. This octopus-like creature in the painting is pulling a group of lovers into its center.

Like the earlier parts of the Tristan trilogy, Cinq Rechants retains Messiaen's obsession with the theme of Time. Perhaps even more than previously is emphasized the idea that Time can be transcended. Messiaen comments:

> in spite of the work's fast tempo, in spite of the dramatic brevity of human life which this tempo suggests, the Beloved One is standing above Time, beyond any musical rhythmical or literary technique, even beyond death, like Edgar Poe's Ligeia, while,

> very mysteriously, "her eyes keep wandering, into the past, into the future...."[11]

For the lovers, time is transcended and yet is accessible to them in all of its forms--past, present, and future. As the poem for the fourth rechant unsyntactically states it, "Your eyes voyaging, in the past."

But in this final part of the trilogy even more pervasive than the theme of Time is the theme of Space, since the very first words in the French text of the poem are: "Les amoureux s'envolent, Bragien dans l'espace tu souffles." The lovers flying off into space signifies that the love of Tristan and Isolde is so expansive that it stretches beyond the bounds of the earth. Other images of space within the text of Cinq Rechants include enclosures such as "the curved plot of flowers," "my prison of love," "circle of day," "the grotto," "castle," and, perhaps most significant of all, the crystal bubble in which the lovers are enclosed in Bosch's triptych. But the spaces of enclosure are neatly balanced against images of expansion, thus suggesting the observation that although there is a limiting aspect to love (after all, it confines one within a tighter relationship than mere friendship), its expansive potentialities are also inherent in a love relationship.

Messiaen's paradoxical insistence on the images of openness and expansiveness, and at the same time of closed space, hiddenness, and perhaps even claustrophobia, governs all five poems of *Cinq Rechants* to a surprising extent. In the first poem, the lovers fly off into space, as noted above; also present is Bluebeard's seventh door, which entails some risk in opening, but some rewards as well. In the second poem, the fan is both closed and unfolded and hence is reminiscent of the musical "fan" from *Turangalîla-Symphonie* with its associations of terror derived from Poe's "The Pit and the Pendulum." The third poem depicts not only a prison of love, but also a new expansive landscape as well. In the fourth poem, the bouquet is undone, loosened, but there are rose-colored shutters which can enclose. Finally, in the final poem of *Cinq Rechants*, extended arms, an image of openness, are juxtaposed with the enclosed garden.

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[11] Messiaen's record jacket notes for Cinq Rechants (MHS 1187).

The polarities of the images of open and closed as used in *Cinq Rechants* receive very perceptive treatment in Gaston Bachelard's *Poetics of Space*. Bachelard's phenomenological study first deals with openness and the feeling of exaltation and immensity that is often common to the poetic experience. He quotes Rilke's saying--"The world is large, but in us it is as deep as the ocean"[12]--which perhaps involves a perception that Messiaen himself was attempting to describe in his misquotation of Juliet: "My beauty is as boundless as the sea."[13] For a writer whose name is O. V.

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[11] Messiaen's record jacket notes for *Cinq Rechants* (MHS 1187).

[12] R. M. Rilke as quoted by Gaston Bachelard, *The Poetics of Space*, trans. Maria Jolas (Boston: Beacon, 1969), p. 183.

[13] Messiaen's record jacket notes for *Cinq Rechants* (MHS 1187).

de Milosz whom Bachelard cites, the "exaltation of space goes beyond all frontiers. 'Away with boundaries, those enemies of horizons! Let genuine distance appear!' And further: 'Everything was bathed in light, gentleness and wisdom; in the unreal air, distance beckoned to distance. My love enveloped the universal'."14 The expansiveness of love for Messiaen leads to a freedom previously achieved only in part in Song X, "Katchi-katchi les étoiles," of Harawi and in the fifth and tenth movements of Turangalîla-Symphonie. There are still elements which are found distressing in Cinq Rechants, but these are now subordinated to the safety of enclosures, to the freedom of the unenclosed, and, even beyond that, to the freedom of flying away into space.

The musical material with which Messiaen chooses to enwrap his mythic center again has many sources. His main source with regard to musical form is revealed in his program notes for the recording of Cinq Rechants which he supervised: "the title is in homage to Le Printemps by Claude le Jeune."[15] This collection of le Jeune's chansons contains pieces made up of alternating rechants (refrains having a recurring text and music) and chants (couplets having a new text, a varying texture, and a different melody from the refrain--but a melody basically similar to every

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[14] O. V. de Milosz, L'amoureuse initiation, p. 155, as quoted in Bachelard, p. 190.

[15] Messiaen's record jacket notes for Cinq Rechants (MHS 1187).

other recurrence of the *chant*).[16] It has been suggested in Chapter V above that the refrain and couplet form, which Messiaen has also used in the second movement of *Turangalîla-Symphonie*, may well be informed also by the design of the medieval rondeau with its repeated refrain. However, it should be clear that Messiaen's form is closer to the *chant-rechant* form of le Jeune that to the AB aab AB of many medieval *rondeaux*.

Messiaen does acknowledge some influence from medieval song, however. Specifically, he names the love songs of Jaufre Rudel and an *alba* by the troubadour Folquet de Marselha. Even though the composer does not mention the most famous dawn song, Guiraut de Bornelh's "Reis glorios,"[17] it seems apparent that attitudes and emotions expressed in the text of that song as well as in Jaufre Rudel's "Lanquan li jorn son lonc en may"[18] and Folquet's "Vers Dieu"[19] give us insight into Messiaen's entire trilogy. In "Reis glorios," the troubadour begins with a pious salutation to God, but soon launches into his prayers for and his worries about the companion who has been attending a lady who is presumably another knight's wife "since the night came on." As Peter Dronke notes:

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[16] See Claude le Jeune, *Le Printemps*, in *Les Maitres Musiciens de la Renaissance Française*, ed. Henry Expert (rpt. New York: Broude, n.d.), vols. XII-XIV.

[17] See *Troubadours, Trouvères, Minne- and Meistersinger*, ed. Friedrich Gennrich (Cologne: Arno Vok, 1960), p. 14.

[18] Music in Gennrich, p. 12; English translation in James J. Wilhelm, *Seven Troubadours* (University Park and London: Pennsylvania State Univ. Press, 1970), pp. 90-91.

[19] Texts and translation in Lyrics of the *Troubadours and Trouvères*, ed. and trans. Frederick Goldin (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1973), pp. 278-83.

> After [the] resplendent opening, the watcher continues in less exalted tones, waking his friend, warning him of danger, cajoling him to rise; he claims to have been on his knees praying for the lover's safety all night.[20]

Folquet's "Vers Dieu" contains some of the same pious exclamations, but addressed to the Blessed Virgin. This song seems to be a completely innocent one, since it praises St. Mary, her Son, God the Father and the Holy Spirit, without once mentioning any clandestine activity. However, the style of Folquet's song is the same as that of secular troubadour song. As Saville notes, the line between the truly pious song and the "God-help-my-friend-to-commit-adultery" song is a very thin one.[21] There is no doubt, however, about the meaning behind Jaufre Rudel's love song, "Lanquan li jorn son lonc en may." In this song, the poet frankly admits that "You're right if you say that I lust or/ Burn for my far-off love."[22] This song, identified by one critic as "the greatest achievement of Jaufre,"[23] interestingly mentions the lady's own room and her garden space; thus we see once again how pervasive are the metaphors of enclosure, particularly of the garden, in medieval poetry. Hence we also see how Messiaen is truly heir to the troubadour-trouvère tradition, for his own reforging of the Tristan myth draws upon the very same categories of experience and imagery that were opened up by the medieval poets of Provence and France.

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[20] Peter Dronke, The Medieval Lyric (New York: Harper and Row, 1969), p. 176.

[21] See Saville, pp. 90-98.

[22] Translation in Wilhelm, p. 91.

[23] Ibid., p. 90.

Musical parallels between troubadour songs and Messiaen's melodic practice would be harder to prove, since Messiaen's melodies so often exploit dissonant intervals such as the tritone and usually have a wider range than the medieval melodies with their comfortable vocal range. Perhaps a certain melodic or rhythmic suppleness found in some linear portions of the couplets may be related to the melodies and rhythms found in more free transcriptions of medieval song. Also, each separate phrase of troubadour-trouvère song is attached neatly to the next much as one piece of a mosaic fits into the space next to another; thus Messiaen's additive method of linking phrases to one another seems congruent with the medieval song writer's equally additive and cumulative method.

Messiaen also claims that the Peruvian yaravi or harawi, which has been discussed and analyzed at length above in connection with his song cycle Harawi, provides one of the sources for his melodic inspiration in Cinq Rechants.[24] However, unlike the very frank way in which these Peruvian melodies were taken over for the first part of the trilogy, with actual tunes being borrowed and transformed by Messiaen, there is no such open borrowing in Cinq Rechants. It is indeed impossible to show a direct relationship between the melodies of these five rechants and the songs found in the d'Harcourt collection (La musique des Incas et ses survivances). No musical relationship between Peruvian sources and Cinq Rechants hence may be proved, in contrast with Harawi, which contains specific Peruvian melodies which have been passed through the "deforming prism" of Messiaen's musical language. What Harawi and Cinq Rechants have in common, in addition to the mythic core of the Tristan myth which they share, is Messiaen's musical language, which utilizes the ascending and descending tritone; chromaticisms; wide, dissonant leaps; and the added and non-retrogradable rhythms.

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[24] Messiaen's record jacket notes for Cinq Rechants (MHS 1187).

The above survey of the music, the text, and the mythological and imagistic framework of Cinq Rechants should serve as an introduction to more specific analysis of this part of the trilogy. Here Messiaen continues to solve the problems of melding myth, poetry, and music with one another, and to make of the elements an artistic statement. My methodology will continue to encompass, as in the treatment of Harawi and Turangalîla-Symphonie above, both analytic and descriptive techniqes, and will continue to be informed by those insights which may be gleaned through phenomenological analysis--i.e., by the study of what is in a work and how we understand it.

The structure of Cinq Rechants, like that of Harawi, depends on the interplay of text and music. The five rechants trace moods and themes and, in so doing, add new layers to our understanding of myth and music and their interaction. Cinq Rechants begins with the freedom of space, the prison of enclosed space, separation, and death; yet, in spite of the three "darker" themes, there appears to be no real feeling of tragedy projected by the first rechant, since the theme of freedom of space is reiterated near the close of the poem and thus seems to establish the prevailing tone of the poem. Hence whatever dark and threatening elements are present, these seem to be neatly balanced off by more joyful elements.

The balance of enclosure and freedom appears again in the second rechant, since the fan is both unfolded and closed. Both "laughter" and "shadow" are present, while the beauty of a flute solo is juxtaposed with the reptilian creatures--the lizards. In the third rechant, the philter with its associations with love and death is the controlling figure, and there is also the reiteration of entrapment or even claustrophobia in the second reference to the Bosch painting:" My prison of love made of light air." The enigmatic reference to the octopus is also found in this rechant. The fourth rechant again balances light-dark imagery as well as open-closed metaphors.

The final _rechant_ knits together all the strands of love-death, enclosure-freedom, flower, melody, octopus, and lizard. The couplet of the _rechant_ introduces Medusa, the terrible feminine figure whose snake-covered head was cut off by Perseus; hence we are reminded of Songs V and XI of _Harawi_ and the tortured cry "Cut off my head." Now the threatening seat of sensibility is removed, and all the terrifying images of the previous works in the Tristan trilogy as well as of the present work are laid to rest.

I

The first _rechant_, as noted above, deals with the themes of separation, love, death, and encapsulated space, but these are balanced by the freedom of the lovers who fly off into space. The musical form chosen for this _rechant_ will be introduction, refrain, couplet, refrain, couplet, refrain, and coda. The text, here given in English translation, is presented below. The pseudo-Sanskrit words will not be rendered into any possible English equivalents, though some possible explanations will be attempted in the analysis which follows. At the left of the text below will be indicated the musical sections of refrain, couplet, etc., which are attached to the words.

Introduction	Hayo kapritama, la li la li la li la ssaréno.

Refrain 1 The lovers fly off, Brangäne, you breathe into space.
The lovers fly off, toward the stars of death.
t k t k t k t k

ha ha ha ha ha thirst

The explorer Orpheus finds his heart in death:

Couplet 1 Star mirror star castle Isolde, of love separated.
Hayoma kapritama
Crystal bubble of star my return.
Hayoma kapritama

Refrain 2 The lovers fly off, Brangäne, you breathe into space.
The lovers fly off, toward the stars of death.

Couplet 2 Star mirror star castle Isolde, of love separated.
Crystal bubble of star my return.
Bluebeard castle of the seventh door
Hayoma kapritama
t k t k t k t k

Refrain 3 The lovers fly off, Brangäne, you breathe into space.
The lovers fly off, toward the stars of death.

Coda Hayo kapritama, la li la li la li la ssaréno.

Introduction. The short introductory passage, carried by a solo soprano, begins with a free-rhythmed, fairly wide-ranging single line of melody. It falls by means of three half steps, a major third, and a diminishing fourth (sounding as a major third). From that point the melody rises a perfect fourth to settle on an a♮'. This tone is reiterated on seven sixteenth notes before rising a step and falling a half step to b^{b}'. After a quarter note rest, the melody falls a minor third to g♮', and all three soprano voices join on that note. The sopranos are directed to sing the g♮' with mouths closed (Appendix, example 54).

The effect of the introduction is that of a primitive call, and at the point of reiteration of the a♮' there is even the suggestion of an incantation. The last tone, with its humming effect, trails off into mysteriousness. The text increases the mystery, since it is written in Messiaen's private synthetic language. It may be speculated that "hayo" is related to the Sanskrit root "ha," which means "to move," "to run," or "to be," or it may be related to the root "han," which means "to slay."[25] Either meaning would be consistent with the basic love-death theme of the trilogy. However, "La li la li la li la" seems unquestionably to be the word "līla," fragmented and retrograded. Here the repetition of the syllables is somewhat reminiscent of Messiaen's hypnotic use of the word "pia" in "Doundou tchil," Song IV of Harawi, though this present repetition is not carried to the lengths of the one in Harawi. "Kapritama" seems to be a seems to be a word inaccessible to explanation, and, at first glance, "ssaréno" seems to be another word of the same type since it has an accent aigu and a double "s" foreign to the Sanskrit language. However, it has been suggested to me[26] that the word may be Messiaen's rendering of "şareno," which means "the arrows of the god of love." This meaning is, of course, consistent with the content of the Tristan myth, and is also compatible with Messiaen's own astrological sign, which is that of Sagittarius the archer.

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[25] I am indebted to Dr. Robert Shafer for information on Sanskrit words and syllables.

Refrain 1. The short musical theme which sets the words "les amoureux s'envolent Brangien, dans l'espace tu souffles" in the first refrain has a kind of question-answer shape, with the question first rising and then descending, and with the answer descending, rising, and then closing by means of a descending tritone (the augmented fourth). Seven tones out of twelve are used for both parts of the theme, the seven tones including C♮, C#, D♮, D#, E♮, F♮, and G# (*Cinq Rechants*, p. 1, ms. 3-6). Although the chorus could well be described as singing in unison (and certainly that is the aural effect), there are many points at which one or more voices drop out and then reenter to create a kind of hocketing effect. Measures marked $\underset{\sqcap\,16\,\sqcap}{2\;\;2\;\;3}$ and 2/8 alternate with one another, the former being close to a pattern called *tritiya tâla* in Çarngadeva's deci-tâla catalogue.[27] The rhythm of the first measure is, in sixteenth-note units, exactly as its metrical marking indicates: an eighth note [2], two sixteenth notes [2], and an eighth plus a sixteenth note [3]. This pattern gives the rhythm a slight wrench. The second measure is made up of two even eighth notes, marked 2/8. The soaring melody and the irregular rhythms express the thought of the text; the same melodic and rhythmic material is chosen for the text "Les amoureux s'envolent / vers les étoiles de la mort."

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[26] By Dr. Shafer.

[27] Grosset, p. 301.

Next follows a short percussive section, based on the vocalized sounds "t k t k," which the singers--tenors and basses--are directed to pronounce "teu keu."[28]

The next part of the refrain is chordal. There are basically three chords, which will be used several times throughout this rechant. The chords appear at the words "Ha ha ha ha ha soif." Although the combination of laughter and "soif" ("thirst") seems ironic or even sardonic, this passage is marked "furieux." The chords themselves are quite thick, being made up of superposed intervals, especially clustered seconds. The first of the three chords includes fourths and seconds of various sizes, a minor third, and a diminished fourth that sounds as a major third. The second and third chords are both in Mode 3; like the first chord in the series, these appear to be made up of superposed intervals of various sizes with the clusters of seconds once again adding thickness to the texture. The chords following the first three are repetitions of those chords (Cinq Rechants, p. 2, ms. 6-8).

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[28] Cinq Rechants, p. 2. It has been suggested to me by Dr. Robert Laudon that the "t k t k" sounds imitate the tic-toc of the clock of the past and future.

The refrain closes with another unison theme setting the text "l'explorateur Orphée trouve son coeur dans la mort" ("the explorer Orpheus finds his heart in death"). Appropriately, the mythical figure of Orpheus has long been associated with music. The medieval encyclopedist Isidore of Seville recounts the legend in which Mercury finds a tortoise shell with dried and stretched sinews; the messenger of the gods then passes this crude "lyre" on to Orpheus, who perfected its playing so that he was "deemed not merely to have swayed wild beasts with this art, but to have moved rocks and forests with the modulation of his song."[29] Ovid recounts the classical tale of the death of Orpheus' wife, Eurydice, and his journey to the lower world to rescue her. Through the beauty of his singing to the accompaniment of his lyre, he is given permission to take Eurydice with him back to the upper world. But he must follow one stricture placed upon him, that of not looking back at his wife until she is safely out of the lower world. This one requirement is too difficult for Orpheus to fulfill, and he loses his wife a second time.[30] Later Orpheus infuriates the followers of Dionysus by his neglect of them, and they tear him to pieces. In his own death, he is reunited with his wife in the lower world.[31] The Orpheus story is not normally an analogue of the Tristan story. However, the importance of this story and its hero to Messiaen's work may be two-fold. First, Orpheus is the player of the lyre, the stringed instrument favored by Apollo. Messiaen's work seems more characteristic of the Apollonian type of musician who is guided by reason, than of the Dionysian type, guided by emotion; therefore we may assume that Orpheus could be a very appealing figure to Messiaen. But even more to the point, Orpheus is an adventurer for love and goes down into the abyss because of his love. For Messiaen also, to love is to face danger. But love is also worth the risks and the terrors which at times may be associated with it.

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[29] Isidore of Seville, Etymologiarum, in Source Readings in Music History, ed. Oliver Strunk (New York: Norton, 1950), p. 98.

[30] Ovid, Metamorphoses, X, 1-63.

The winding melodic line setting "l'explorateur Orphée trouve son coeur dans la mort" might be described as paralleling Orpheus' journey down into the underworld, his journey back to the upper world, and a final return to that lower realm (*Cinq Rechants*, p. 2, ms. 9, and p. 3, ms. 1-3, contraltos and basses).

Couplet 1. A duet by sopranos and contraltos comprises the entire first couplet. The text for the soprano line of melody describes the "miroir étoile le château d'étoile" ("star mirror star castle") and "Yseult d'amour séparé" ("Isolde of love, separated"). The "star mirror star castle" refers, in Messiaen's words, to "Tristan's wondrous glass-castle."[32] However, the references to glass or crystal in any of the sources for the story are not to a castle but to the crystal bed in the grotto which Tristan and Isolde share.[33] But somehow Messiaen's combination of crystal bed and castle seems to be a richer, more layered association than those in any possible source he may have encountered.

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[31] *Ibid.*, XI, 1-66.

[32] Messiaen's record jacket notes for *Cinq Rechants* (MHS 1187).

The thin texture (two simultaneous lines of melody) and the melodic phrases chosen to set to the text dealing with "star mirror" and "star castle," as well as "bulle de cristal" ("crystal bubble") are as translucent as the words they set. There are essentially two melodic themes in the soprano line. Theme *a*, which sets the text dealing with the enclosure of the crystal castle and with Isolde's separation from love, is itself a circular one, since it is made up of only four tones used again and again. The melody rocks back and forth on the descending tritonal intervals from d♮'' to a^{b}' and the diminished fourth from e^{b}'' to b♮'. The melody finally breaks out of its repetitiveness with two additional tones, d♮' and f♮', which bring the phrase to a close (Appendix, example 55).

Messiaen claims that he uses the *tâla Miçra varna* in this part of the couplet,[34] but the *tâla* is not used in its totality nor is it used consistently. The portion of *Miçra varna* which he uses consists of the first four values:

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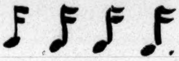
[33] See, for example, Gottfried von Strassburg, p. 261.

[34] See Messiaen's record jacket notes for *Cinq Rechants* (MHS 1187) Grosset, p. 301.



He uses the fragment of the Indian *tâla* for the words "Yseult d'amour," and he doubles the values (see Appendix, example 55, especially ms. 6-7).

The next part of the text for the soprano line deals with the crystal bubble encapsulating the lovers as in Bosch's painting. Melodic theme *b* setting this portion of the text obstinately repeats a c#'' before moving on to the other tones, and the repetition effectively imitates the claustrophobic smallness of space within the crystal bubble. At "retour," however, the melodic line moves up by means of the interval of a tritone to a g♮'', and this leap upward constitutes a strange kind of "escape" at the point where there should be a "retour" or return. Strict word-painting, however, has never been a goal for Messiaen (*Cinq Rechants*, p. 3, ms. 8-12).

For the contralto line, the text consists of the reiterated pseudo-Sanskrit words, "hayoma kapritama"; the melodic material again falls into two phrases. Theme *a* begins with a three-note motif--b^{b}', a♮', and b♮'--which in retrograde form is the beginning of the second phrase. Each theme contains a thirty-second note triplet pattern, and a wide descending leap, followed by an ascending tritone (in the first phrase, the tritone is a diminished fifth and, in the second phrase, an augmented fourth). Theme *a* lies generally higher than theme *b* (Appendix, example 56). Since the contralto themes are shorter than the soprano themes, there are more repetitions of the contralto line against fewer of the longer soprano phrases. The repetitions work out as follows: theme *a*, theme *b*, theme *a*, theme *b*, and part of theme *a* of the soprano line is superposed over five appearances each of themes *a* and *b* of the contralto line. Obviously, because of the difference in length of the melodic phrases in the two voices, the points at which the two voices meet will be constantly shifting, with new intervallic relationships being created at each measure. Only part of theme *a* in the soprano voice is presented at the end of the couplet, and the last syllable of the word "é-toi-les" becomes the article "les" modifying the word "amoureux" in the next refrain.

Refrain 2. The second refrain is a repetition of the first.

Couplet 2. However, the second couplet, while retaining some of the features of the first couplet, also adds new ones. The soprano-contralto duo is the same as before, but now there is a spoken tenor line as well as a bass line characterized by wide leaps of octaves, sevenths, and sixths. The three tenor voices speak the sounds "t k t k" in various rhythmic values: first in thirty-second note values, next in triplets, and finally in a syncopated pattern of a thirty-second note, a sixteenth note, and another thirty-second note value.

Also new to the couplet is a wide-ranging bass line setting a text dealing with the villain Bluebeard and his castle with the seventh door ("Barbe Blue château de la septième porte"). Since Messiaen once studied with Dukas and has spoken of his indebtedness both to Dukas' teaching and to his compositions,[35] it is reasonable to assume that the version of the Bluebeard legend of which the composer-poet is thinking in *Cinq Rechants* is that of Dukas' opera, *Ariane et Barbe-Blue*. Rollo Myers writes:

> In the libretto, written especially for Dukas by Maeterlinck (whose *Pelléas et Mélisande* had already been set by Debussy), a new variant of the well-known Blue-Beard legend is proposed whereby Ariane persuades Blue-Beard to allow her to offer the other captive wives their freedom. And when they are too timid to accept it, preferring the captivity they know to a liberty of which they are afraid, Blue-Beard does nothing to prevent Ariane herself from leaving the Castle and returning to the light of day.[36]

A comment by Gustave Samazeuilh perhaps points up the significance of Dukas' version of the Bluebeard legend for Messiaen's trilogy: "The character of Ariane symbolizes the liberating pity which struggles against the enslavement and feebleness of humanity, and endeavours to educate toward a higher consciousness those souls which are not yet sufficiently developed to understand its significance."[37] In *Harawi*, the *bien aimée* was the liberating force; in *Turangalîla-Symphonie*, the great feminine magicians--Vivian, Ligeia, and Isolde--were acclaimed. Now, in *Cinq Rechants*, Ariane, as another of these magical characters, thus adds another layer to our understanding of the figure of Isolde.

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[35] Rollo Myers, *Modern French Music* (New York: Praeger, 1971), p. 156; Mari, p. 26.

[36] Myers, *Modern French Music*, pp. 58-59.

The material concerning the Bluebeard legend in the text is alternated here with the pseudo-Sanskrit words "Ha kapritama," thus developing by further elimination the words he used earlier (i.e., "hayo" and "hayoma"). There are four repetitions of the bass melodic theme setting "Barbe Blue château de la septième porte Ha kapritama"; the first time the theme appears, it begins on the first beat of the measure but, since the theme is not one that can be enclosed in a neat period that finishes at the end of a measure, new beginnings of the theme will be found thereafter at slightly different points in the measures. As noted in the first couplet, the difference in length of the themes of the two melodic lines--the lines sung by soprano and contralto--created new and constantly changing vertical relationships; now the addition of a third line of melody, again moving independently of the other two lines, creates new and shifting sonorities, coinciding by chance but not sounding as if randomly generated. The sound of the spoken "t k t k" is an ever-present undercurrent, but it does not confuse the other three genuinely melodic lines.

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[37] Gustave Samazeuilh, "Paul Dukas," *Grove's Dictionary*, 5th ed., II, 797.

Refrain 3. The last refrain may be the most interesting of all. The unison refrain melody, heard previously, is found in the lower five voices (first contraltos, second and third contralots, tenors, first bass, and second and third basses), while each of the three sopranos sings a chromatic theme in canon with the others. The canon is sung with mouths closed to create a humming sound, while the lower five voices sing the regular refrain text ("Les amoureux s'envolent Brangien dans l'espace tu souffles,/ les amoureux s'envolent vers les étoiles de la mort").

Another "t k t k" section is heard, followed by the furious laughter also heard in the previous refrains, but this time with the last chord rising higher than in the other two refrains. The explorer Orpheus once again appears in the text of the refrain.

Coda. The coda repeats the introduction exactly to make a completely rounded and closed form.

Notable in this rechant is the persistent use of the tritone. It appears as either the augmented fourth or the diminished fifth at many points. In the refrain it appears at "dans l'es-" of "Brangien dans l'espace tu souffles," at "é-toi-" of "vers les étoiles de la mort," and at "trou-ve" of "l'explorateur Orphée trouve son coeur dans la mort." In the couplet, the tritone appears in the soprano line at "mi-roir," "châ-teau," and "Y-seult" of "miroir d'étoile chateau Yseult d'amour séparé," and again at "re-tour" of "bulle de crystal d'étoile mon retour." In the alto line of the couplet, it appears regularly at "-ta-ma" of "kapritama," where it may be observed in both ascending and descending forms. In the bass line of the second couplet, the tritone appears at "-te Ha" of "septième porte Ha kapritama." The tritone does not appear in the introduction or in the coda. But it appears at least once in every important melodic phrase in this _rechant_. The use of the tritone here and elsewhere is so pervasive that it becomes one of the distinguishing characteristics of _Cinq Rechants_.

II

The second _rechant_ presents a series of unusual images, including the visual image of the closed as well as unfolded fan, the auditory image of the flute solo,[38] the image of the four lizards, and the enigmatic "mon rire d'ombre" ("my laughter of shadow"). The musical form for this _rechant_ is as follows: couplet, refrain, couplet, refrain, and coda. Following is a translation of the French text:

Couplet 1 My first time earth earth the fan unfolded
My latest time earth earth the fan closed
Luminous my laughter of shadow my young star on
the streams.
Flute solo, rocks the four lizards as you depart.

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[38] For a defense of seeing images as not only visual but also auditory, tactile, olfactory, etc., see René Wellek and Austin Warren, _Theory of Literature_ (New York: Harcourt, Brace, 1956), p. 176.

Refrain 1 Mayoma kapritama ssarimâ

Couplet 2 My first time earth earth the fan unfolded
My latest time earth earth the fan closed
Luminous my laughter of shadow my young star on the streams.
Flute solo, rocks the four lizards as you depart.
Man mano nadja lâma krîta makrîta mayo ma yo ma
Ma yo ma yo mata krî mata krîma lâdja na noma noma

Refrain 2 Mayoma kapritama ssarimâ

Coda Mano mano nadja lâma krîta
Ma yo ma yo mata krî
Flute solo, rocks the four lizards as you depart.

Couplet 1. Messiaen's text for the first couplet, which will be repeated in the second couplet verbatim with additions from the synthetic language, seems even more gnomic than usual. He does not explain "My first time" or "My latest time," though the obvious associations are with birth and death; however, since he uses these phrases in connection with the unfolded and closed fan, they seem to be part of the imagery of the expansiveness as well as of the enclosing nature of love. Thus we may conjecture that these represent the first and latest times when love has been expressed between the two lovers. We recall Messiaen's misquotation of Juliet's words in which she is said to be describing the expansiveness of her feelings in regard to love: "My beauty is as boundless as the sea."[39] Her expansive mood is in keeping with the writer Milosz quoted by Bachelard above: "My love enveloped the universe."[40] Messiaen's repetition of the words "earth earth" is a naming of one of the four elements according to ancient science as also listed in Breton's poem in praise of his wife: "My wife, with eyes of the plain of Water, Air, Earth, and Fire."[41] Of these elements, "earth" is of course the most natural one to use in characterizing Woman. Archetypically, Woman is associated with earth and fertility as male is associated with the Sun as generator.

The expansiveness of the fan and its connection with the experience of love is also in keeping with the way in which the image of the fan is used in *Harawi*. In Song IX, "L'escalier redit, gestes du soleil," Messiaen writes: "La gaieté fleurit/ dans le bras du ciel./ Éventail en chant d'oiseau" ("Gaiety flourishes/ in the arms of heaven./ Fan like a bird song"). This is a joyful, life-affirming association for the fan image, linking it with heaven and with the heavenly mediator which is the bird--i.e., with a symbol of the beloved. However, in *Turangalîla-Symphonie*, the musical fan, as used in the seventh movement, is linked with Poe's story of "The Pit and the Pendulum," and hence is also associated with death. Here the composer was apparently thinking of the configuration of the swinging pendulum, which is in the shape of a fan. For Messiaen, therefore, the image of the fan can represent polarized opposites of terror or expansive love. In _Cinq Rechants_, the fan is representative of all that is joyful and life-affirming.

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[39] Messiaen's record jacket notes for *Turangalîla-Symphonie*.

[40] Milosz, as quoted in Bachelard, p. 190.

[41] Breton, *Selected Poems*, pp. 34-35.

In the lines which follow, Messiaen continues to defy the rules of grammar and logic. Just as in Synthetic Cubism, the images are displaced and planes are broken up and realigned to form new shapes and entities, Messiaen puts words together without the usual kinds of syntactic connections. Thus, for example, "Lumineux mon rire d'ombre ma jeune étoile sur les fleuves" ("Luminous my laughter of shadow my young star on the streams") sets up interrelationships and associations which relate to each other but do not at first glance reveal the coherence of the whole. "Luminous" and "star" are clearly associated with one another, as are "luminous" and "laughter," but the relationship of "luminous" and "shadow" contains a great deal of tension--the kind of tension that is at the heart of the whole Tristan trilogy. However, examining the archetypal meaning of "shadow," a deeper level of understanding may be revealed. For Jung, the term "shadow" signifies an important part of the personality. Jung's associate, M. L. Von Franz, writes: "The shadow is not the whole of the unconscious personality. It represents unknown or little-known attributes and qualities of the ego--aspects that mostly belong to the personal sphere and that could just as well be conscious."[42]

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[42] M. L. von Franz, "The Process of Individuation," in _Man and_

Sometimes these "unknown attributes" include the dangerous and dark aspects of the personality. For Messiaen, in addition to the shadow as a symbol of darkness, there is also the abyss which often functions in a similar fashion, as in both *Harawi* and *Turangalîla-Symphonie*. Only by facing up to these dark elements can one learn to come to terms with oneself and eventually to defuse the threatening nature of the experience. In *Cinq Rechants*, the shadow seems to have been faced and to have become a valuable experience, for now it is paradoxically associated with light (luminosity), with laughter, and with "my young star on the streams." Thus, this is the good shadow which, according to Jungian psychology, when integrated into the personality can be enriching. As von Franz remarks, "If the shadow figure contains valuable, vital forces, they ought to be assimilated into actual experience and not repressed. It is up to the ego to give up its pride and priggishness and to live out something that seems to be dark, but actually may not be."[43] Messiaen's frequent references to "shadow" and "abyss," often in conjunction with a brighter image, would seem to indicate some effort on his part to integrate these darker and useful elements into his artistic personality.

There is yet another Cubist-Surrealist construction which Messiaen uses in this *rechant*, and that is "Solo de flûte, berce les quatre lézards en t'éloignant" ("Flute solo, rocks the four

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His Symbols, ed. C. G. Jung, p. 174.

[43] *Ibid*., p. 183.

lizards as you depart"). Here the beauty of the music is seemingly displaced by the imagery of the unattractive reptilian creatures in the text. In the first *rechant*, Messiaen has already used imagery from Bosch's triptych, *Garden of Earthly Delights*; therefore, the conjecture that the lizards which appear in the second *rechant* are derived from the group of lizards in the left hand panel, entitled "Earthly Paradise," of the same triptych, may be defended. Even in the prelapsarian state of man and the world which Bosch depicts, the lizards, like the mouse in the mouth of the cat, may be a suggestion that evil and cupidity are not far away. However, lizards can also be a symbol of the nature which man has not yet despoiled. In a poem entitled "Complainte du lézard amoureux" ("Lay of the Lizard in Love") by the well-known contemporary French Surrealist poet René Char--a poem set to music by Messiaen's former student, Pierre Boulez--the lizard is depicted as an important symbol of the natural cycle of life. The lizard is sunning himself on the rocks, and we are made privy to his thoughts as he gazes at the goldfinch, with which he is enamoured, that is sitting vulnerably on a sunflower. The lizard warns the bird:

> Man is out shooting, so hide yourself;
> The sunflower is his accomplice.
> Only the grasses are on your side,
> The pliant grasses of the fields.[44]

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[44] Translated by J. H. Brumfitt in his record jacket notes for Pierre Boulez's *Le Soleil des Eaux* (Angel S 36295).

Here, as J. H. Brumfitt notes, nature would be at peace if it were not for the jarring element of man.[45] Fortunately, the man departs from the idyllic setting, leaving the lizard still in love with the goldfinch, but with the goldfinch once again out of danger. One can only speculate whether Messiaen was aware of the poem by Char, which was set to music by Boulez in 1948[46]--the same year in which Cinq Rechants was written--and whether this image of the innocent, yet sensual lizard would have had any influence on the poetry that he wrote for his music.

The flute solo is a fairly straightforward image; Messiaen may be thinking simply of the beauty of the sound of any flute solo, or he may be remembering a specific solo in French music such as Ravel's "The Enchanted Flute" from Shéhérazade or Debussy's virtual flute solo with orchestral accompaniment, "The Afternoon of a Faun." The latter work, inspired by Mallarmé's poem about a faun who has an erotic dream, may not implausibly throw light on Messiaen's use of the image of the four lizards, faunlike in their sensuality.

The idea of rocking in the line "flute solo, rocks the four lizards as you depart" may be a reminder of the rocking of the "little one in your green arms" in Song V of Harawi. In Harawi, rocking conveys tender feeling. There is no reason to suppose that rocking is meant to be understood any differently in *Cinq Rechants*. The close of the first couplet of this composition thus explicitly connects the departure of the beloved with curious imagery that expresses, among other things, tenderness. On the whole, this couplet with its imagery of the open and closed fan and its association with the expansiveness and limitations of love, provides perhaps the most sensual section of *Cinq Rechants*. In spite of the disconnected nature of the images, the impression that is finally given is one of wholeness and even harmony.

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[45] Ibid. Cf. Mellers, Caliban Reborn, pp. 109-10.

[46] See Fred Goldbeck, "Pierre Boulez," Grove's Dictionary, 5th ed., I, 844.

Messiaen follows the disjunct images of the French text of the couplet with the quite unfathomable pseudo-Sanskrit text of the refrain: "Mayoma kapritama ssarimâ." Also, the text of the couplet is superposed over the spoken words "Man mano nadja lâma krîta makrîta mayo ma yo ma." With the exception of "nadja," which is the title of a book by André Breton,[47] these words, as Messiaen has said, are chosen more for their sound than for their sense.

For this complicated and often obscure text, the amount of musical material which Messiaen uses is actually not large. For example, the couplet for this second *rechant* begins with a theme, setting the words "ma première fois terre terre l'éventail déployé" ("My first time earth earth the fan unfolded"), which is comprised of only five tones. The melody rises and falls, like a fan opening and closing, and it teases the ear with its alternation of perfect fourths with tritones. Variety is added by having the contralto voice sing the line of text concerning the opening of the fan and the bass soloist sing the line concerning the closing of the fan. The five tones setting these words are: C♮, D♮, F♮, F#, and B♮. The melodic line in each case--for both contralto and bass solos--breaks into two themes, with the first theme ending on a d♮'' and the second sinking to a c♮'. The measures are marked $\frac{2\ 2\ 2\ 1}{16}$, 2/8 and $\frac{5\ 4}{16}$. The $\frac{2\ 2\ 2\ 1}{16}$ in the first measure, resembling part of the Hindu rhythm simhavikrama,[48] expresses exactly the three eighth notes followed by an added sixteenth note, the added note giving a slight wrench to a rhythm which would otherwise be quite regular (Cinq Rechants, p. 10, ms. 1-7, first contralto and first bass). The couplet continues with the first soprano singing the words "lumineux mon rire d'ombre" ("Luminous my laughter of shadow"), joined by the unison chorus at "ma jeune étoile sur les fleuves" ("my young star on the streams"). The melody is based on tones which are very nearly chromatic. There are two minor thirds within the near chromaticism, but they are in the wrong locations to make the mode that of Mode 4. The phrase rises, then it vacillates around a c♮'', b♮', c#'', e^{b}'', and d♮''; finally it falls by means of the tritone from b^{b}' to e♮' and comes to rest on a repeated c♮'. Thus far, the solo and the unison melodic lines have both ended on c♮', giving that tone a kind of dominance. The rhythmic meters are again precisely notated: 2/8, $\frac{3\ \ 2}{16}$, $\frac{3\ \ 2\ \ 2}{16}$, and 2/8. The $\frac{3\ \ 2}{16}$ and $\frac{3\ \ 2\ \ 2}{16}$ measures resemble portions of the Hindu talas known as nihçankalila and turangalîla.[49]

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[47] See André Breton, *Nadja*, trans. Richard Howard (New York: Grove, 1960).

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[48] See Grosset, p. 301.

The unison passage slows to a rallantando molto, while at the same time it diminuendos as well. Following this signal of a closure, there is another solo passage, in this instance sung by the first soprano and resembling a primitive forest call, which sets the syllable "Ha." There are seven tones in this "forest call,"[50] and there are two phrases. One of the phrases rises from a g♮' to a d#'', while the second begins on an e♮'', rises to its high point at a♮'', and then sinks by chromatic tones to b^{b}' (Cinq Rechants, p. 10, ms. 13-17, first soprano only). The a♮'' is reached by means of the leap of a tritone from d#'' to the a♮''. We have noted previously that the syllable "ha" is the root for the Sanskrit word "to move," "to be," "to run," but here it seems to be used simply as a cry without meaning as language. For this melodic material, the hegemony of the closing c♮' is broken, since the second phrase ends on a b^{b}'.

Tritones abound in the setting for "solo de flûte, berce les quatres lézards en t'éloignant" ("flute solo, rocks the four lizards as you depart"), and, in all instances except one, these are descending tritones. No other melodic line seems so heavily laden with tritones. The rocking back and forth on the tritones admirably sets the thought of the flute solo which "rocks the four lizards." The first soprano and first tenor begin the melodic line, and it is completed by four solo voices--soprano contralto, tenor, and bass. The rhythms are again precisely metered, and are indicated as 5/16, 2/4, 3/8, and 2/8. In *Harawi*, where each measure was not so precisely marked, it was possible to speak of "added values." The first measure, with its two eighth note values and one sixteenth note value, would have been considered to be a measure with an added value. However, now that Messiaen is accounting for each beat in each measure, it is only possible to speak of changing meters.

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[49] See ibid., pp. 301-02.

[50] A forest call is included in Song VI of Harawi. See Harawi, p. 34.

Refrain 1. The refrain uses all of the tones in the chromatic scale, and again Messiaen is able to find new and quite economical ways of using this common material. The refrain is comprised essentially of two themes, each one repeated. For the first phrase, he uses seven tones to set "kapritama ssarima" and utilizes the rhythm long-short-long (notated $\underbrace{2\ \ 3}_{16}$) followed by six short values in two groups of three plus one long (notated $\underbrace{3\ \ 3\ \ 2}_{16}$); the latter pattern is again part of the *nihçankalila tala*.[51] The composer than uses another set of nine tones, placed a fifth higher than the last "tone row," and utilizing a slightly different metrical arrangement, which is notated $\underbrace{2\ \ 3}_{16}$, $\underbrace{3\ \ 3}_{16}$, and $\underbrace{2\ \ 3}_{16}$. The tones of the second theme are not an exact imitation, but they are similar enough for this repetition to qualify as the tonal imitation of a canon "mise à plat" ("laid out flat").[52] There are some small intervallic differences in the two similar but not identical themes, and the one large difference is that the final interval in the second phrase descends a tritone in order to join the f♮' which begins the repetition of the first theme. This, then, will also be the shape of the second refrain which appears later.

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[51] See Grosset, p. 301.

Couplet 2. The second couplet uses the contralto and bass solo lines against the tenor and bass voices speaking the pseudo-Sanskrit text in contrapuntal rhythms. There are acciacaturas preceding the quarter note values setting the text "mano" and "noma" (Appendix, example 57). The soprano solo and unison section, setting the words "lumineux mon rire d'ombre ma jeune étoile sur les fleuves," now returns with the same rhythmic values, but the meter has become regularized as a steady 2/4 pattern, thus shifting the word and tone accents. The invented words of the text are spoken by the lower tenors and basses in rhythms contrapuntal to one another as well as to the unison melodic material sung by sopranos, contraltos, and upper tenors and basses. The section earlier termed the "forest call" also reappears and has the spoken text added to it as does the next appearance of the "solo de flûte" passage.

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[52] See Lévi-Strauss, "'Bolero' de Maurice Ravel," p. 6.

Refrain 2. The second refrain is unchanged from its first appearance.

Coda. The coda contains two short sections--first, a section based solely on the pseudo-Sanskrit text spoken by the lower tenors and basses, and then a section based on the "solo du flûte berce les quatre lézards en t'éloignant." The second section is begun by soprano solo and tenor, and completed by four soloists--soprano, contralto, tenor, and bass. The melodic line, as noted above, is heavily laden with tritones. The coda slows to a rallentando molto and fades away to a near whisper as Messiaen's way of bringing to a close the entire second rechant.

III

Even though, as Mellers notes, "there is no climax within the individual movements" or rechants, it nevertheless is still possible to claim "that the central (third) Rechant forms an apex to the whole work."[53] Monodic, contrapuntal, and chordal writing will be exhibited in this rechant. But more important, as Messiaen himself indicates, there is in the third couplet " a long crescendo, unfolding itself like a tonal drapery in a twelve part canon" which reaches "a climactic collective howl."[54]

The text of this rechant unites images of enclosure--"Ma robe d'amour" ("My gown of love"); "Ma prison d'amour faite d'air léger"

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[53] Mellers, Caliban Reborn, p. 103.

[54] Messiaen's record jacket notes for Cinq Rechants (MHS 1187)

("My prison of love made of light air")--with an image of openness--"Toute la beauté paysage neuf" ("All the beauty, landscape new"). The well-known philter is once again prominently evoked, this time in a plural form ("les philtres"), and once again it is symbolic for Messiaen of falling in love. The form chosen for this rechant is: introduction, couplet, refrain, couplet, refrain, couplet, and coda. The text in English is provided below:

Introduction	My gown of love my love My prison of love made of light air. Lîla, lîla, my memory, my caress. Mayoma ssari ssari mane thikâri
Couplet	Oumi annôla oumi annôla oumi sarî sarîsa flouti yoma Trianguillo tender gown All the beauty, landscape new
Refrain 1	Troubadour Vivian Isolde, all the circles all the eyes. Octopus of light wounds, tramples, reddens my caress
Couplet 2	Oumi annôla oumi oumi annôla oumi sâri sarîsa floutî yoma Trianguillo tender gown All the beauty, landscape new Cheu cheu mayoma kalimolimo cheu

Refrain 2
Troubadour Vivian Isolde, all the circles all the eyes.
Octopus of light wounds, tramples, reddens my caress

Couplet 3
Oumi annôla oumi oumi annôla oumi sarî sarîsa floutî yoma
Trianguillo tender gown
All the beauty, landscape new
Cheu cheu mayoma kalimolimo cheu cheu

Coda
All the philters are quaffed this night.

Introduction. The text for the introduction deals with the enclosing images of "Ma robe d'amour" ("My gown of love my love") and "Ma prison d'amour faite d'air léger" ("My prison of love made of light air"). The gown of love may be an especially beautiful garment which is not merely worn for love alone, but which is symbolic of love itself. It is warm and enveloping. But the "prison of love made of light air," again referring to the crystal bubble in Bosch's painting, is here, on the other hand, a genuinely claustrophobic image. In the painting, naked lovers are shamelessly seated inside the bluish crystal bubble, but still they look very cramped inside their prison of light air. Thus love can be both confining as well as warmly enveloping; it at once liberates and imprisons.

The word "lila" ("love" or "play"), which is immediately repeated once, reminds us of Messiaen's title for his *Turangalîla-Symphonie*, which he calls "a song of love" and "a hymn to joy."[55] In the third rechant, the idea of "a song of love" seems particularly appropriate and is borne out by the words that follow "lîla, lîla": "ma mémoire, ma caresse" ("my memory, my caress"). Then follow the words from the private pseudo-Sanskrit language: "mayoma ssarî ssarî mane thikâri." In spite of the possibility set forth in Chapter IV that "mané" in Song XI might refer to the first word in the French translation for "Mene, tekel, upharsin" (Daniel 5:26), this warning to King Nebuchadnezzar hardly seems to fit the context here, and thus any possibility of an echo from *Harawi* at this point perhaps may be discounted.

At the beginning of the introduction, only the first soprano, the second and third contraltos, the second and third tenors, and all three basses are heard in a treatment which differs distinctly from Le Jeune's more consistent texture. Throughout the introduction (as well as the *rechant* itself) the distribution of voices will change, with some voices being added and others dropped out. The same melodic theme with slight rhythmic changes sets both "Ma robe d'amour mon amour" and "Ma prison d'amour faite d'air léger." The theme begins on a g♮', move by ascending tritone to a c#'', returns by a descending tritone to g♮', leaps up the octave to g♮'', and then returns to the original tone, g♮'. There is another leap of an ascending major sixth, a descending minor third, and a final descent by means of a tritone to a g ' (Cinq Rechants, p. 15, ms. 1-7, first soprano). Messiaen's paradoxical method of using the same musical theme for antithetical or nearly antithetical texts is here displayed. His composition is not noted for slavish representation of the verbal thought. However, his choice of two alternating chords as accompaniment for this melodic material--a major-minor chord with its root on E and a diminished ninth chord with the same root--are very close to word painting. The enclosing effect of using only two chords aptly sets the claustrophobic phrase dealing with the prison of love, and these chords also do no violence to the phrase concerning the gown of love. The chords are sung with nearly closed mouth on the syllable "um."

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[55] Messiaen's record jacket notes for *Turangalîla-Symphonie*.

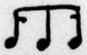
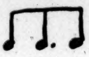
The melodic theme for "lîla, lîla," sung by the first soprano, rises along the intervals of a perfect fourth, a major second, and a tritone. "Ma mémoire" is set to the tones f♮'', a#', f#', and g#', which constitute the intervals of a descending diminished sixth (sounding as a perfect fifth), a descending major third, and an ascending major second. "Ma caresse," sung by the second and third sopranos, has the same set of descending intervals, with the exception that the series of tones begins lower, on a c#''. Curiously, Messiaen notates the first descent as it sounds, as the perfect fifth from c#'' to f#', instead of as the descending diminished sixth in the setting of the previous phrase, "Ma mémoire."

The chords hummed by the tenors and basses which undergird these melodic phrases are not as thick as many of those encountered in *Turangalîla-Symphonie* nor as thick as those setting the "Ha ha ha" of the first *rechant*,but they are no less problematical. The first, underlying "Lîla, lîla," dwells in the cloudy realms of a V^7 built on C and an added sixth built on E^b. The next chord, the harmonic foundation for the melodic phrase setting "ma mémoire," can be viewed as a minor eleventh with the root on B, or as a suspension which, with the A♮ resolving to a G#, would become a V^7 chord built on E. The chord which is underlying the melody and text for "ma caresse" is the same type as the previous one--that is, a minor eleventh built on G, or a suspension desiring to resolve to a V^7 built on C.

The first sopranos descend at the words "Mayoma ssari ssari mane thikâri," descend, return upward, and then continue their descent; the second and third sopranos provide an organum of parallel fourths to the melodic line of the first sopranos. The chords below these parallel fourths sung by the soprano duet are quite complex, and can be viewed either as minor elevenths built on various root tones (those of F#, A, A, D, and C) or they can be viewed as chords created from superposed seconds, especially the second chord in the series, which is made up largely of a cluster of seconds with one minor third. The first chord in the series dwells both in the realm of an added sixth chord built on A with the implications of an added sixth chord built on E (*Cinq Rechants*, p. 16, ms. 5-10). The meters for the introduction are constantly changing, and include the markings 3/8, 3/16, 4/8, 2/8, 5/16, $\underbrace{3\quad 3\quad 2}_{16}$, and 6/8. The $\underbrace{3\quad 3\quad 2}_{16}$ rhythm is a portion of both nihçankalila and turangalîla tâlas.

Couplet 1. The first couplet is based on the pseudo-Sanskrit text "oumi annôla sarî sarîsa floutî yoma," followed by the words "Trianguillo robe tendre/ Toute la beauté paysage neuf" ("Trianguillo tender gown/ All the beauty, landscape new"). The pseudo-Sanskrit words are again untranslatable except for the possibility of the word "sarî" being related to "ma robe tendre" of the couplet. "Trianguillo" is neither French nor pseudo-Sanskrit. It may be a form of "triangular," or "anguillo" may be the eel, which would be in keeping with the lizard and octopus images. The couplet ends with "Toute la beauté paysage neuf" ("All the beauty, landscape new"), and this is one of the spacious, enlarging images rather than one of the enclosing images. The newness of the beauty and the landscape also hints that Messiaen here is alluding to the re-integrative qualities of love--qualities which stand in opposition to the disintegration which seems apparent in the composer's handling of language, which is highly fragmented throughout the text of Cinq Rechants.

The couplet, which thus begins with a setting of the pseudo-Sanskrit text, also begins very chordally, with six chords being used in a kind of enchaining ostinato pattern. The first chord is made up of two three-note clusters of adjacent seconds; the second chord has a pair of adjacent seconds plus one three-note cluster of adjacent seconds; the third chord breaks into two parts, with a major second in the tenors, and with altos and sopranos singing a minor-major seventh chord. The fourth chord again has superposed seconds and one major third; the fifth chord is the same type of chord as the third; and the final chord once again superposes seconds, a perfect fourth, and a major third. None of the chords fit into any of Messiaen's modes. Underneath the chords are the words "cheu cheu cheu mayoma kapritama," spoken in regular sixteenth note values by the third tenor and the basses (*Cinq Rechants*, p. 17, ms. 1-4).

At "sarî sarîsa," tones cascade chromatically downward, being tossed from one voice to another. Thick chords cluster, crescendoing, at the syllables "flou-tî." The chords break off in the upper voices, leading into a polyphonic ostinato in the lower three voices, setting the word "trianguillo." There is movement by step, third, and fourth in each of the three voices, which move in both parallel and opposite directions. The ostinato pattern of tones appears five times in sixteenth note values (*Cinq Rechants*, p. 18, ms. 1-2, third tenor and basses). Above the "trianguillo" ostinato, a long-held chord on the syllable "yo-" and a shorter chord on "-ma" are heard. The chord on "yo-" outlines an open B^b octave and fifth along with an E to B fifth, thus causing the chord to have the ambiguous qualities of two tonalities at once. The chord for the syllable "-ma" also has implications of two tonalities, outlining an open A major octave and fifth, along with the interval of the minor seventh (Cinq Rechants, p. 18, ms. 1-2, sopranos, contraltos, and first tenor). The meters are constantly changing, and include 2/8, $\frac{2\;\;3\;\;2}{16}$, 4/8, 3/8, 4/4, and 3/8. The most regular rhythms are those found in the ostinato sixteenth note values in the setting of the word "trianguillo," while the least regular are the short-long-short rhythmic values chosen for the word "annôla." On the first appearance of the word "annôla," the rhythmic values are  ; on the next appearance of the same word, the values are augmented to  , with the metrical marking of $\frac{2\;\;3\;\;2}{16}$. The principles of augmentation and diminution for the musical setting of this word will be maintained in each of the two following couplets.

Refrain 1. The refrain is built on the text "Troubadour Viviane Yseult tous les cercles tous les yeux/ Pieuvre de lumière blesse foule rose ma caresse" ("Troubadour Vivian Isolde all the circles all the eyes/ Octopus of light wounds, tramples, reddens my caress"). Here Vivian and Isolde are linked to the troubadours, and on one level the linkage is a logical one. The ideal of courtly love informs both the Tristan story and the poetry of the troubadours, some of whom flourished contemporaneously with the authors of the early written forms of the Tristan legend (e.g., Beroul, c. 1150; Thomas of Britain, c. 1185 [?]; and Gottfried von Strassburg, fl. 1210). Roger Loomis has traced rather carefully the possible connections between the Tristan story and the troubadour-trouvère culture, and he indicates that Thomas of Britain almost certainly was part of Eleanor of Aquitaine's court in England and that she was instrumental in "the earliest popularization of the Tristram theme in French and Anglo-Norman literature." Loomis, one of the foremost scholars of medieval romance, supports his conjecture by noting that "two troubadours intimately known to Eleanor refer to Tristram and Ysolt as _famous_ lovers."[56] While Messiaen may not have been aware of the scholarly speculation regarding the connections between the troubadours, the story of Tristan and Isolde, and the Arthurian material, it seems clear that he has intuitively recognized their kinship in his poetic rendering of "Troubadour Viviane Yseult."

"Tous les cercles, tous les yeux" is a phrase which is congruous with the circular, enclosing images in the five poems of _Cinq Rechants_. The circle traditionally symbolizes heaven and perfection, and also it can symbolize eternity.[57] But more importantly it also encloses space as does the "prison of love" in the introduction to this _rechant_. Thus also are eyes appropriately connected with circles, for by their action are men caught up in love, which for Messiaen is in part symbolized by the enclosed space of the circle.[58]

The line "Pieuvre de lumière blesse foule rose ma caresse" flies off, however, not just into Synthetic Cubist or Surrealist combinations of images but nearly into the irrational world of Dada, which revolted against all sense and meaning in constructions such as Meret Oppenheim's fur-lined teacup and Duchamps' marble cage entitled "Why Not Sneeze?" Nevertheless, there are possible associations which keep Messiaen's line from lapsing into nihilistic nonsense. The octopus of light, as noted above, may be associated with an octopus-like creature, half vegetable and half fish, from the central panel of Bosch's triptych, _The Garden of Earthly Delights_, where the creature seems to be grasping a group of people with its ivory-gold tentacles and swallowing them. Also, in the painting _The Invisible Isle_ by Sir Roland Penrose--a painting which helped to inspire Song IX of _Harawi_--the hair of the woman, who is suspended between earth and heaven, resembles golden tentacles, which envelop the tiny island. It is possible that the golden hair in the painting is significant, for its golden ringlet-tentacles may be the inspiration for "Pieuvre aux tentacules d'or" in the last _rechant_. The other images in "Pieuvre de lumière blesse foule rose ma caresse" are juxtaposed violently one upon the other, with the beautiful and tender image of "ma caresse" being found together with the painful and perhaps gory "blesse," which is either the noun "wound" or the verb "to wound." "Foule" may be either the noun "crowd" or the verb "to trample." The former interpretation brings us the negative connotations of

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[56] Loomis, trans., _Romance of Tristram and Ysolt_, p. xix.

[57] Cirlot, p. 45; Ferguson, p. 153.

[58] On eyes in love poetry, see Chapter II, above.

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[59] See Chapter IV, above.

crowding or, more severely, of the condition of feeling agoraphobic, which may be juxtaposed with the claustrophobia noted in the image of the lovers inside the crystal ball. This, then, is the often puzzling, even frustrating text of the refrain.

The musical setting of the refrain has two melodic themes, one setting the material about the troubadour, Vivian, and Isolde, and the second setting the material about the octopus of light. For the first, the first soprano again has the solo melodic line, outlining a diminished triad with a major seventh. Following the outlining of what would be a dissonant chord if it were used vertically, there are ascending and descending tritones. The pattern of intervallic relationships which had set "Troubadour Viviane Yseult," now transposed one-half step lower, is utilized in setting "tous les cercles tous les yeux." The hummed chord beneath the melodic line for "Troubadour Viviane Yseult" is a ninth chord on B, while the hummed chord beneath the melodic line for "tous les cercles tous les yeux" is a diminished seventh chord built on C#. The rhythms in the melodic line are four sixteenth notes, followed by an eighth note, a sixteenth note, and a dotted eighth note. The latter three notes, marked $\underset{\ulcorner 16 \urcorner}{3\quad 3}$, give a slight wrench to the otherwise regular rhythms. The $\underset{\ulcorner 16 \urcorner}{3\quad 3}$ rhythm can be seen as resembling the Hindu *tâla hamsalîla*.[60]

The second theme, setting the text dealing with the octopus of light, again has a solo melodic line carried by the first soprano. The following tones appear: d#'', d♮'', c#', d#', c♮'', d♮', g#', g#'. The wide leap between d♮'' and c#' gives this phrase a distinctiveness which sets it apart. The first time the phrase appears, setting "Pieuvre de lumière blesse," the rhythm is that of four sixteenth notes, an eighth note, and three sixteenth notes. On the repetition of the phrase, at the text "foule rose ma caresse," the rhythm is augmented upon the words "ma caresse" to give added emphasis to the words and to mark the end of the musical phrase (Cinq Rechants, p. 19, ms. 5-9). The chords underlying the second phrase are diminished sevenths, built on A#, G#, and A respectively. This small amount of musical and textual material, then, constitutes the whole of the refrain.

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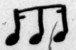
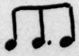
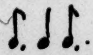
[60] Grosset, p. 301.

Couplet 2. The second couplet is essentially a repetition of the first, with the exception that there is one more "oumi annôla oumi" added, with its characteristic harmonic construction retained from its previous appearance. Again, the rhythmic changes are found at the setting for the word "annola," with each subsequent appearance of that word constituting and augmentation of the first appearance. Thus, there are the values noted above:  and  ; in addition, there is a third appearance of the word, set to the rhythmic values . This is not one of Messiaen's most elaborate rhythmic games, but it is deliberately done and is carried out consistently from couplet to couplet.

Refrain 2. The second refrain is identical to the first.

Couplet 3. In contrast to the shorter and relatively simple first and second couplets, the third couplet receives an exceedingly elaborate treatment. Still another "oumi annôla oumi" is added to the couplet, followed as before by the "sarî sarîsa" and "floutî" material. Now, however, the chordal setting for the word "yoma" is delayed until two rather brilliant sections have been inserted. The first section is built according to a mathematically precise plan of overlapping. Pairs of chords move adjacently by parallel and contrary motion with the series not moving always onward and upward but retrogressing to an earlier pair of chords and then proceeding from that point. Chord-pairs 1, 2, and 3 are used, followed by 2, 3, 4, and 5; finally, use is made of chord-pairs 3, 4, 5, 6, and 7. The chords are virtually unsingable except by persons with absolute ptich, since they are composed of extremely thick clusters of major and minor seconds in combination with thirds, fourths, and an occasional fifth. This section begins piano and crescendos into the second interpolated section.

The second interpolated section in the third couplet is an exciting one; it consists of a repeated cascading melodic phrase on the syllable "Ha." This phrase is the basis for a twelve-part canon in this interpolated section. The melodic material is treated in the following manner: there are two descending minor seconds, a descending perfect fourth, another descending minor second, and one more descending perfect fourth; the melody then rises a major seventh, descends a major seventh, repeats the same rising major seventh, and then falls the distance of a diminished fifth. Each of the twelve voices retains the same intervallic relationships for its own phrase, except that each one, entering at the delay of an eighth note value, begins a whole tone lower than the last. The first soprano repeats the melodic pattern five full times, with each of the lower voices entering later being able to complete only some portion of the five entrances. For example, the lowest bass part, which is the last to enter, is able to complete only two entrances (*Cinq Rechants*, p. 26, ms. 1-4). The chords on "yoma," unlike the previous appearances of these chords, now include ten instead of five of the voices, while the other two voices, the second and third tenors, speak the word "sarî" in regular sixteenth note values. This section began at *fortissimo* and ends *forte fortissimo*, with a pause of three and one-half beats separating this section of the couplet from the coda which follows.

Coda. Marked *caressant* and later *souple et caressant*, the coda stays at a much softer dynamic level than the preceding couplet. The text, "Tous les philtres sont bus ce soir" ("All the philters are quaffed this night"), makes reference to a main symbol of the love between the two lovers, and here are resolved the conflicts between claustrophobic and agoraphobic images (prison and crowd), the warm, enclosing images (gown and caress) and the one enlarging, expansive image of the landscape. The melodic theme for "Tous les philtres sont bus ce soir" outlines tones in E major, but the chords underlying the melody are no less complex and dissonant than those encountered in the refrain and couplets.

Immediately before the entrance of the final melodic phrase, a chord is heard that seems literally stolen from jazz--a chord which reveals its nature as soon as it resolves to the tonic chord with added sixth. This chord is spelled g#-a-c♮-d#'-g#', and since the chord it resolves to is solidly in E major, the chord in question must be an altered $III^{\#}_{3}$ with an added fourth scale step. The chord to which it resolves, the added sixth chord in E major, appears simultaneously with the final melodic phrase of the coda. This phrase, sung by the first soprano, is marked *souple et caressant*, and it is indeed, as described, subtle and caressing, descending by step and leap from on high and then reversing directions, to create a meandering but generally descending contour (*Cinq Rechants*, p. 29, ms. 6-10). The calm-sounding melodic phrase and the resolution to E major have the effect of relaxing the excitement of the climactic third couplet of this third *rechant*. One can only agree with Mellers that this *rechant* is truly the "apex" of the work.

IV

While the third *rechant* has stressed the spatial imagery of enclosure and expansion, the text of the fourth *rechant* presents the balanced light-dark imagery of "amour du claire au sombre" ("love from light to dark") and the open-closed imagery of "Mon bouquet tout défait rayonne" ("My bouquet all undone is radiant") and "Les volets roses" ("The rose-colored shutters"). There is also a suggestion of the symbolic disintegration and reintegration through love which had been expressed through the music of the fifth movement of *Turangalîla-Symphonie*.

The form of this *rechant* is refrain, couplet, refrain, couplet, refrain, couplet, refrain, and coda. The translation, with pseudo-Sanskrit words retained necessarily as they originally stand in the text, is as follows:

Refrain 1
Niokhamâ palalane soukî
My bouquet all undone is radiant
Niokhamâ palalane soukî
The rose-colored shutters O'ha, love, love, from light to dark

Couplet 1
Roma tama ssouka rava kâli vâli ssouka nahame kassou

Refrain 2
Niokhamâ palalane soukî
My bouquet all undone is radiant
Niokhamâ palalane soukî
The rose-colored shutters O'ha, love, love, from light to dark

Couplet 2
Roma tama ssouka rava kâli vâli ssouka nahame kassou

Refrain 3	Niokhamâ palalane soukî My bouquet all undone is radiant Niokhamâ palalane soukî The rose-colored shutters O'ha, love, love from light to dark
Couplet 3	Roma tama ssouka rava kâli vâli ssouka nahama kassou
Refrain 4	Niokhamâ palalane soukî My bouquet all undone is radiant Niokhamâ palalane soukî The rose-colored shutters O'ha, love, love, from light to dark
Coda	Roma tama my bouquet is radiant

Refrain 1. Even though the text of the refrain describes "Mon bouquet tout défait rayonne" ("My bouquet all undone is radiant"), which suggests the disintegration brought about by love before reintegration can take place, the musical material is highly integrated and severely limited. There are three melodic themes in the refrain which set (1) "Niokhamâ palalane soukî/ Mon bouquet tout défait rayonne," (2) "Niokhamâ palalane soukî/ Les volets roses O'ha," and (3) "amour amour clair au sombre O'ha." The first parts of themes 1 and 2 are similar to each other since they are completely based on the same repetition of a tritonal

pattern, in this case the augmented fourth from b♮' to f♮'. Following the tritonal passage in the first theme, setting the pseudo-Sanskrit words, is a passage with new intervals which sets "Mon bouquet tout défait rayonne." The introduction of new material keeps the melodic lines from becoming too monotonous. The melody moves by half-step, step, and minor third (*Cinq Rechants*, p. 30, ms. 1-4). The second theme begins tritonally like the first but then moves off into its own melodic line, setting "Les volets roses O'ha." The mew material is again governed by half-step movement. In this instance, the line finishes with an acciacatura which leaps from an f#'' down to an f♮' on the word "O'ha" (*Cinq Rechants*, p. 30, ms. 5-8). The third theme, setting "amour amour du clair au sombre," rocks back and forth on the intervals of a minor third and major and minor seconds. This theme, too, finishes with an acciacatura leap from c♮'' down to d♮'. The closing musical formula for the rose-colored shutters and for "love, love, from light to dark O'ha" is thus similar.

The entire refrain uses all twelve voices in unison. The meters are the constantly changing ones, here including 3/4, $\underbrace{2\ \ 3\ \ 2}_{8}$, 2/4, $\underbrace{3\ \ 2}_{8}$, and $\underbrace{2\ 2\ 3\ 2}_{8}$. The latter pattern is another part of the Hindu *Miçra varna tâla*,[61] which differs slightly from the portion used in the first *rechant* which, being marked *très vif*, passes by very quickly. The dynamic level is *fortissimo*.

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[61] *Ibid*.

Couplet 1. The couplet, in contrast to the refrain, is marked *modéré* and is to be performed in a monotone, according to the instructions in the score (p. 31). It uses only the text "Roma tama ssouka rava kâli vâli ssouka nahame kassou," set to an extremely limited melodic ostinato at the beginning of the phrase but branching out into new material at the words "ssouka rava kâli vâli." The monotonous melodic ostinato sung by the contraltos consists of movement by minor second from an $e^{b'}$ to a d♮', ending with the reiteration of that d♮' (*Cinq Rechants*, p. 31, ms. 1-2). At "ssouka rava kâli vâli," the monotony of the single reiterated tone is broken, and the melody moves by step and leap, both upwards and downwards. The three tenors seize the melodic line at "ssouka ssouka nahame kassou"; the last part of their melody is a kind of inversion of the last part of the melody of the contraltos (*Cinq Rechants*, p. 31, ms. 1-4). The monotonous, one-tone melody returns in the contralto part at "rava kâli vâli roma tama tama roma tama tama tama." Here "kâli" may not implausibly refer to Kâlī, one of the emanations of the Indian mother goddess Dūrgā. Philip Rawson explains the dark or death-dealing side of Dūrgā; "As Kālī she is beautiful and black, garlanded with human heads and hands, with lolling tongue and treading upon a corpse. She is the destroyer, time, which is also the creator."[62] If indeed this is a rare instance where Messiaen's pseudo-Sanskrit does utilize an actual word which means a person or thing, then this allusion to Kālī would be in keeping with the negative, even death-dealing qualities of Ligeia and the Venus d'Ille, both of which help to inform the meaning of *Turangalîla-Symphonie*. Also, any reference to Kālī could be seen as an oblique suggestion of Messiaen's obsession with Time, especially again in *Turangalîla-Symphonie* where Time is likewise both creator and destroyer.

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[62] Philip Rawson, *Indian Sculpture* (New York: Dutton, 1966), p. 71.

Against the melodies sung by the contralto and tenor on the text "roma tama ssouka rava kâli vâli ssouka nahame kassou," the basses move, mainly by step and an occasional leap, in tritonal vertical intervals. The basses are directed to sing with mouths nearly closed (*à bouche fermée*). The tritone intervals ascend and then descend. The rhythms on the first appearance of the tritonal passage are comprised of sixteenth notes, eighth notes, a quarter note, and a half note; on the second appearance of the same passage, thirty-second note values are added as well (*Cinq Rechants*, p. 21, ms. 1-7, first and second basses only).

Refrain 2. The second refrain is identical to the first.

Couplet 2. What makes the second couplet different from the first is its treatment of the bass tritones. It is true that they continue to move mainly by step against the contralto and tenor melodies, but now the rhythm is much transformed by augmentation and diminution into triplet eighth notes, quarter notes, tied quarter notes, four sixteenth notes, and one dotted eighth note tied to a quarter note and an eighth note (*Cinq Rechants*, p. 32, ms. 4-10, first and second basses only).

Refrain 3. The next refrain is again the replica of the first two.

Couplet 3. The melody used in the previous couplet is retained for the third couplet, but with a new variation found in the treatment of the bass line. Here chosen to begin the third couplet is the second portion of the bass line from the first couplet; this tritonal material accompanies the contralto melody setting the first "roma tama tama tama." Then a fragment from the first couplet motif, along with another similar motif, is utilized to accompany the tenor melody setting "ssouka ssouka ssouka." The last bass accompaniment for the monotonous melody sung by the contraltos on the text "rava kâli vâli roma tama tama tama" is another set of tritones moving stepwise, this time in triplet sixteenth note values as well as in triplet eighth note values, followed by an eighth note tied to a quarter note, two quarter notes, and an acciacatura tritonal interval preceding the final quarter note tritonal interval (Cinq Rechants, p. 34, ms. 1-7).

Refrain 4. The last refrain is, again, identical to the others.

Coda. Completing the rechant is the coda, which this time uses both old musical material from the couplets as well as completely new material. There is the monotonous melody setting "roma tama tama tama," sung by the contraltos; there are also the parallel tritones sung by the basses in accompaniment to the monotonous melody of the contraltos. In this instance there is a group of five sixteenth notes to vary the rhythm of the bass line. Then the first soprano has a freely rhythmed, unaccompanied, and wide-ranging melody, ascending to an a♮'', descending and rising again to a g♮'', descending and rising again to an e^{b}'' before making its final descent to d♮'. A reiterated chord sung by tenors and basses is made up of a first inversion tonic chord in E major with the jarring dissonance of an E^{b} added; this chord "resolves" to a chord made up of D-E-G-B-D, which sounds as an added sixth chord on the tonic in G.

Thus a small amount of textual material and an equally small amount of melodic material--material dominated by the tritone with a narrow accompaniment consisting of tritonal intervals varied by some rhythmic changes--are economically utilized in this *rechant*. Instead of being a symptom of flagging invention, however, the economy of the material seems to be a deliberate and artistic integration of effective elements. In its limitation of material and its almost unvarying system of repetition, this *rechant* may also be closer to the form used by Claude le Jeune which consisted of similar or even identical refrains and couplets.

V

The final *rechant* is the culmination not only of *Cinq Rechants* itself, but also of the entire Tristan trilogy. The strands which it knits together from the other *rechants* include the images of openness and enclosure, time, space, flowers, melodies (especially solar melodies), the octopus, and lizards. What it ties together for the trilogy is the understanding of the entire love experience, and appropriately it again emphasizes for the final time both the problematical nature of love and its integrating power. The form which the rechant takes is that of introduction, couplet, refrain, reprise of the refrain, couplet, and coda. The text contains more variety than the poetry of the previous refrain.

Introduction Mayoma kalimolimo mayoma kalimolimo
Your eyes voyaging in the past
Solar melody of curved flower garden
tk tk tk tk

Couplet 1 Diamond-shaped my flower forever
Flako flako
Philter Isolde oarsman of love
Flako flako
Fairy Vivian to my song of love
circle of day.
Hayo tramples, reddens hayo arms extended
Octopus with tentacles of gold
Perseus Medusa bee alphabet major.

Refrain 1 Droning flower turns toward death,
Four lizards the grotto octopus and death:

Corolla which bites the second watchman, to
be eaten first. Ha

Reprise of Refrain
Droning flower turns toward death.
Four lizards the grotto octopus and death:
Corolla which bites the second watchman, to
be eaten first. Ha

Couplet 2
Diamond-shaped my flower forever
Flako flako
Philter Isolde oarsman of love
Flako flako
Fairy Vivian to my song of love
circle of day.
Hayo tramples, reddens hayo arms extended
Octopus with tentacles of gold
Perseus Medusa bee alphabet major.

Coda
Mayoma kalimolimo mayoma kalimolimo
t k tk t k t k
in the future

Introduction. The text of the introduction begins with the pseudo-Sanskrit words "Mayoma kalimolimo," and continues with "Tes yeux voyagent, dans le passé" ("Your eyes voyaging in the past") and "Mélodie solaire de corbeille courbe" ("Solar melody of curved flower garden"). Thus we are immediately confronted with the way in which the mind of man travels as part of a natural process into the past by means of visual memory and/or his imagination. Here the poet-composer does not think of past, present, and future as separate entities; like Bergson, he thinks of all as being present simultaneously and being equally accessible. Also, time is integrated with space here, since the eyes travel in the past just as the lovers, in the first poem, traveled into space. The implication here is that the experience of love transcends ordinary boundaries of time and space. In the couplet we will find the text describing a veritable trip into the past; we join Tristan, the "oarsman of love," and Isolde on their journey to Cornwall, which is King Mark's land. But there is further journeying in the past that brings us to the fairy Vivien of the Arthurian legend. And we travel even greater distances to a more ancient and frightening legend of Greek anitquity--the legend which tells the story of the beheading of the fearful Medusa by Perseus. Paradoxically, these events, including the terrible appearance of the Gorgon-head, are part of the present as well as the past, since they are illustrative for Messiaen of certain aspects of the relationship between man and woman. Here, as in Harawi and Turangalîla-Symphonie, falling in love can involve fear as well as great emotional reward. It causes great strains in the personality, but it ultimately is an integrative experience.

Also underlining the integrative aspect is the linking of the solar melody and the curved flower garden. "Mélodie solaire" may be confidently interpreted as Messiaen's recognition of the ancient idea of the harmony of the spheres in which planets were thought to generate harmonious sounds as they revolved in space. Thus in Robert Fludd's seventeenth-century treatise, Utriusque Cosmi Historia, a diagram shows the sun and the other "planets," each tuning to its own particular note. The sun's note, incidentally is G.[63] The whole notion of the harmony of the spheres involved the idea that hence was reflected heavenly perfection, which thereby was capable of being related to man's nature. When man was "in tune" with himself and the cosmos, he could perhaps perceive the harmony of the spheres, which could be imitated in his own life and his own music. In a dialogue in Cicero's Somnium Scipionis, a question concerning the music of the spheres is raised. The answer given is that this music "is produced... by the onward rush and motion of the spheres themselves; the intervals between them, though unequal, being exactly arranged in a fixed proportion, by an agreeable blending of high and low tones various harmonies are produced; for such mighty motions cannot be carried on so swiftly in silence.... Learned men, by imitating this harmony on stringed instruments and in songs, have gained for themselves a return to this region...."[64] John Hollander further defines the ancient relationship between man and cosmos: "In the Ptolemaic astronomy...the universal proportions could be seen as realized in the ratios to each other of the diameters of the heavenly spheres. In terms of this 'harmony,' the old myth of the music of the spheres as representing the sounds of heavenly perfection could be reinterpreted as a metaphysical notion, characterizing not only the order of the universe but the relation of human lives to this cosmological order."[65] Thus for Messiaen also the "solar melody" is not a frivolous idea, for it relates to the way in which the experience of love perfects one and makes him in tune with the cosmos.

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[63] Hollander, pp. 242-32.

[64] Quoted in ibid., pp. 29-30.

The curved flower garden looks back to the scene represented in the first and last songs of Harawi, for which the ultimate influence is probably the second act of Wagner's opera Tristan und Isolde, where the lovers sink down on the flowery bank. The flower garden also appears in Turangalîla-Symphonie in the form of the Garden of Love's Sleep, which, as Messiaen notes, "is full of... plants and new flowers, of melodious birds of bright colors."[66] The garden--presumably once again a garden of love--in Cinq Rechants is curved, a reminder of the perfection of the circle.[67] Thus, in a line of poetry which seems on the surface extremely disjunctive, Messiaen has in fact integrated the heavenly perfection of the music of the spheres with the perfection of the circle and has brought both into relationship with the garden symbolizing the love experience.

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[65] Ibid., p. 28.

[66] Messiaen's record jacket notes for Turangalîla-Symphonie.

[67] See Cirlot, p. 45.

Four melodic themes set the text of the introduction. The first theme, setting "Mayoma kalimolimo," is in vigorous 7/8 meter and is sung in unison by the tenors and basses. The melody is dominated by chromatics but contains one leap of an ascending minor seventh (spelled as an augmented sixth) near the center of the phrase (Appendix, example 58). The second theme, setting "Tes yeux voyagent," for unison sopranos and contraltos, begins with the upward leap of a major seventh, moving down by an augmented second (sounding as a minor third) and a minor second. The meter is comprised of one measure each of 3/8 and 3/4 (Appendix, example 59). "Dans le passé" ("in the past") has three repeated quarter notes on d^{b}', followed by a tritone in the form of doubled vertical intervals, sung by contraltos and basses. The tritone appears on the last syllable of "passé" (Appendix, example 60). Then the supple melody which sets the text "Mélodie solaire de corbeille courbe" ("solar melody of curved flower garden") appears, as an unaccompanied soprano solo. The melody is both heavily chromatic and tritonal. It is almost completely within the whole-tone scale, and it meanders upward and downward within the fairly narrow range of d♮' and e♮''. The rhythms are regular, being comprised of eighth notes and quarter notes (Appendix, example 61). A section of the spoken sounds "t k t k" follows the "solar melody" passage, and the introduction closes with a repetition of the music which previously had set "dans le passé," but this time on the closed mouth syllable of "um."

Couplet 1. In the first couplet, Messiaen appropriately draws together his usual assortment of characters from medieval legend--Tristan, the "oarsman of love," Isolde, and Vivien--as well as from ancient myth--Perseus and Medusa. Spatial imagery is again prominent, culminating in the "cercle du jour" ("circle of day") which unites the spatial with the temporal. The most significant new image, however, is introduced in the first line "Losangé ma fleur toujours" ("Diamond-shaped my flower forever"). The diamond shape (reproduced below in the diamond-shaped notes of the setting of the spoken sounds of "t k t k") is here associated with a flower which in turn is associated with the beloved. As a symbol, it appears often to be indicative, according to Cirlot who is citing Ania Teillard, of "the irradiant, mystic 'Centre'."[68] This is the same symbolism of the Center that Mircea Eliade identifies. "Every microcosm, every inhabited region, has what may be called a "centre'," Eliade insists; "that is to say, a place that is sacred above all."[69] And for Tristan and Isolde, it is clear that each finds his "center" in the other. The person in love finds that his whole existence is oriented around the beloved who for him is his "center."

Not new to this rechant are the disjunctive terms "foule" ("crowd" or "tramples") and "rose" ("rose-colored" or "reddens").

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[68] Ibid., p. 77.

[69] Mircea Eliade, Images and Symbols: Studies in Religious Symbolism, trans. Philip Mairet (1961; rpt. New York: Sheed and Ward, 1969), p. 39.

These were found in strange juxtaposition in the line "Pieuvre de lumiere blesse foule rose ma caresse" in the third rechant. These problematical words are now combined with the pseudo-Sanskrit word "hayo" and the pharase "bras tendu" ("arms extended"). The arms are extended as if to embrace someone, a fact which suggests that this line should be seen as related to the line from the third rechant which concluded with "ma caresse." The next line in this rechant, "Pieuvre aux tentacules d'or" ("Octopus with tentacles of gold"), also recalls the image of the octopus of light in the line from the third rechant to which reference has been made above.

The final line of the text of the couplet once again juxtaposes legend, visual images, and suggestion in Messiaen's characteristic way: "Persée Méduse l'abeille l'alphabet majeur" ("Perseus Medusa bee alphabet major"). The story of Perseus, the son of Danäe by Jove, receives considerable attention in Greek mythology. In the legend, which centers upon an episode of decapitation, Danäe is being aggressively wooed by King Polydectes, whom Perseus opposes. If Polydectes will turn his attentions away from Perseus' mother, the son will reward him with the head of the gorgon, Medusa. The hero successfully decapitates Medusa through the help of the gods, and he returns to find that King Polydectes has not kept his part of the bargain. Thus he is moved to unveil the fearful gorgon head, which turns the king to stone.[70]

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[70] See Robert Graves, The Greek Myths (Baltimore: Penguin, 1960), I, 237-41.

Messiaen seems interested in viewing the episode of the decapitation from several angles. It is a mythic event which appears to underlie the words "Cut off my head" in Songs V and IX of Harawi. Goléa has been previously cited as suggesting that the head is the seat of sensibility and hence is the source of cerebral anguish;[71] thus, eliminating the head is at some time or another presumably desired by every sensitive, overly aware person such as an artist must be. Medusa's head is a particularly ugly and death-dealing one. But it also should be carefully noted that it has the power to turn one into stone; thus, if stone is understood metaphorically with reference to the emotions, getting rid of this head would be a way of unleashing the feelings which are the antithesis of coldness and stoniness. Hence from another angle, Medusa is a figure of the archetypal terrible woman, whose harmful qualities are neutralized through the myth.

"L'abeille l'alphabet majeur" ("Bee alphabet major") is a particularly knotty combination of terms such as might be characteristic of Cubist or Surrealist poetry, and here only conjecture is possible. The bee as pollinator could be related to the flower imagery which is so prevalent in all three works in the Tristan trilogy. Also, there is a mention of a droning flower in the verses for the refrain of this last rechant; thus it is not impossible that there might be a connection between "l'abeille," meaning "bee," and "bourdon," which means "drone" both in the sense of the male bee and also of the organ stop called "bourdon." The association of "l'abeille" with "bourdon" is, however, a point which might be argued. Only slightly less puzzling perhaps is the way in which Messiaen next drops in the reference to the alphabet, though in this instance we may recall the distrust of the Surrealists for logical language, meaningful words, and even the building blocks of language--the letters of the alphabet. Anna Balakian notes that "in his preface to the Alphabet sourd aveugle of Messens, Paul Eluard scorns even the value attached to the symbols of language: 'Stop before putting letters together. As far as possible, forget reading, writing, spelling--and even the sensational appellation of stammering'."[72] That Messiaen might have been fascinated with this opinion--the notion that words, even letters, are at times useless as a means of communication and should be shunned--seems evident on account of his invention of the synthetic language and his violent collisions of non-matching terms in the same line of poetry.

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[71] Goléa, Rencontrez, p. 161; see also Chapter III, above.

Messiaen adds one final word, "majeur," to the line under consideration above. This word at first seems virtually inexplicable in this context.[73] It is true that this word may be associated with the idea of the major scale. In spite of his own modal system, Messiaen does not completely eschew the major-minor tonal system. But as the following analysis of the music will demonstrate, however, the line of poetry containing the word "majeur" is not set to a strongly major-minor melodic line or harmonic structure. Rather, dissonant intervallic leaps are present as well as a tritonal harmonic accompaniment.

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[72] Anna Balakian, The Literary Origins of Surrealism (New York: New York Univ. Press, 1947), p. 18.

[73] Dr. Robert Laudon has reminded me of the fact that the word "majeur" also refers to the capital letter; thus "L'abeille l'alphabet majeur" could be a pun on "bee" and (capital letter) "B."

The music which sets these complex lines is very thin in texture, for it is monodic or unisonal with only one pair of chords, one instance of contrapuntal movement, and, at the end of the couplet, one set of tritones to accompany the melody. There are six short melodic themes, each being of the tritonal type; a wide leap appears in four of the themes, and the tritone appears at least once in four of the six themes. None of the thematic material falls into Messiaen's modal categories.

The musical theme setting "Losangé ma fleur toujours" has two tritones within it--one near the beginning and one at the end. It is sung by the first contralto (*Cinq Rechants*, p. 37, ms. 1-2, first contralto only). Accompanying this melody is a pair of chords, moving up by adjacent half-step, sung by tenors and basses on the word "flako." Each of the chords is made up of a diminished fifth and a perfect fourth, reckoning from the bottom tone, which is d♮. The meters change from 7/16 to $\frac{3\ \ 2\ \ 3}{16}$, with the $\frac{3\ \ 2\ \ 3}{16}$ measures bearing a striking resemblance to the Hindu *tâla vijanya*.[74]

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[74] Grosset, p. 302.

Having seven basic beats in each of the two types of meters gives the rhythm a slight but delicious wrench. The whole musical setting thus far described is repeated for the text "Philtre Yseult rameur d'amour" ("Philter Isolde oarsman of love").

The words "Fée Viviane à mon chant d'amour" ("Fairy Vivien to my song of love") are then sung by the first soprano alone; the setting involves a musical theme which has a wide ambitus from c#' to b♮''. Within the theme there are two tritones, both occuring near its close, and one leap of a ninth. The meters change from 3/16, to 2/8, and return to 3/16.

The following theme, again sung by soprano alone, sets the text "cercle du jour" ("circle of day"). It might be expected here that Messiaen might choose a melody that somehow might imitate a circle--e.g., one that would be the same forward as retrograde--but Messiaen is more subtle than that. He chooses a melodic line of only four tones, one for each syllable; there is only a small range, encompassing in distance no more than an augmented fifth (Messiaen's own spelling). The impression that is given is that of enclosing space within the sounds of the music. The intervals in the melodic theme are a descending perfect fifth, an ascending minor second, and an ascending major second. The meter changes from 2/8 to 5/16, returning to 2/8, which places a slight rhythmic wrench in the center of the phrase (Cinq Rechants, p. 37, ms. 9-11, first soprano only). Then the first soprano and the third contralto sing in octaves a wide-ranging call on "hayo hayo," which is answered by the ascending interval of a whole step sung by the first and second contraltos and the third tenor in octaves. The intervals sung by the soprano and contralto are a descending major seventh, an ascending augmented fourth, and an ascending perfect fifth. These intervals, in addition to the ascending major second sung by the contraltos and tenors, are taken up by the other voices--the first and second tenors, basses, contraltos, and first and second sopranos--and are tossed from one voice to another in a kind of ostinato pattern.

The same melody which had set "Fée Viviane à mon chant d'amour" is used here for the text "foule rose hayo," sung by sopranos and tenors; simultaneously the contraltos provide a contrapuntal melody, setting the text "Pieuvre aux tentacules d'or/ Persée Meduse." The third soprano and third tenor interject a short motif--a descending perfect fourth followed by a descending diminished fifth--on the words "bras tendu" ("arms extending"). "L'abeille l'alphabet majeur" has its own melodic theme which is sung in unison by sopranos, joined by contraltos and tenors and later by basses. This melodic line is also marked by the leap of a descending major seventh and the characteristic tritones. The theme ends on a c♮' which is fairly low for the sopranos (the tenors have dropped out by this point) but which is a fairly comfortable range for the contraltos and basses. The values of the notes lengthen to half notes for the last two tones of the phrase.

Accompanying this melodic line of the syllable "ha" are tritonal vertical intervals in pairs moving either a half-step upward or a half-step downward. Although one may well conjecture that the "majeur" ("major") in the text is the major scale and/or the major-minor tonality, the conjecture, as we have seen, is not borne out by the musical material setting the line which contains the word. Rather, the melodic line is composed of dissonant intervals and the harmonic accompaniment is that of tritones. The final cadence is from d^{b}' to c♮', a movement which does not strongly suggest an authentic cadence in C major. The low tones in the melody and the tritonal accompaniment are the last sounds heard in the couplet.

Refrain. In the refrain of this final *rechant*, some images from previous *rechants* reappear, including the lizards from the second *rechant* and the octopus from both the third *rechant* and the couplet of the fifth *rechant*. The grotto, which is also present, was an important part of the imagery of *Turangalîla-Symphonie*, where it appears in the eighth movement, "Développement de l'amour." In his program notes to this movement, Messiaen writes: "The last stroke of the tam-tam vibrates in the echoes of oracular grottos--echoes of languages of the Beyond reach us...."[75] In *Cinq Rechants*, the grotto may also be "oracular," and since logical discourse is avoided so much in this *rechant*, it may be that the purpose of the image is to serve as a reminder of the aforementioned "languages of the Beyond." The grotto here may also be reminiscent of the trip down into the cave made by Pelléas and Mélisande to find her lost golden ring in Debussy's opera--a trip which Mellers compares to a descent into the womb.[76] In any case, in Cinq Rechants the image seems to be symbolic of transcendence as well as of the disintegration-reintegration process associated with love.

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[75] Messiaen's record jacket notes for *Turangalîla-Symphonie*; see above, Chapter VI.

An image new to this rechant and new to Cinq Rechants as a whole is "Fleur du bourdon" ("Droning flower") which "tourne à mort" ("turns toward death"). Here the words are characterized by most interesting (and frustrating) ambiguities. "Bourdon" may be translated as (1) "pilgrim's staff," (2) "drone" or male bee, and (3) the organ stop known as "bourdon." The possible translation "flowering of the pilgrim's staff," though tempting in the light of the medievalism of the Tristan story and Messiaen's own Catholic belief, seems less supported by the imagery and associations than the other possible meanings. The drone as a male bee creates a link with the last line of the couplet which makes reference to a bee ("l'abeille"). The organ stop known as "bourdon" is, however the most appealing interpretation of the word, for the composer is himself an organist and a creator of organ works. He would be very much aware of the qualities of this organ stop, which W. L.

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[76] Mellers, Caliban Reborn, p. 69.

Sumner has described as a "droning or buzzing quality."[77] Messiaen may also be aware of the use and meaning of the drone in Indian music.[78] Here the constant sound provided by the tamboura player presents an uninterrupted background for the music. As Mellers notes, "The drone, which is eternity, independent and oblivious of our joys or distresses, hums continuously, the music of the spheres. Against it, the player will begin to mull over the raga appropriate to the hour and place."[79] If this meaning for "bourdon" may be admitted, then perhaps here too Messiaen is expressing his desire to transcend Time.

The final line of the refrain, "Corolle qui mord deuxième garde à manger d'abord" ("Corolla which bites the second watchman, to be eaten first") seems at first glance to fly off totally into a negation of logical meaning. Yet the "watchman" immediately reminds us of that famous watchman Brangäne, who guards the lovers in Wagner's music drama. We hence may also be reminded of the monkey in Song VIII of Harawi[80] and of the watchman of the medieval alba who warns the lovers of the dawn and of the danger of discovery by the husband. Also, in some medieval versions of the Tristan story, Isolde (who, like the beloved, is symbolized for

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[77] W. L. Sumner, "Organ Stops," Grove's Dictionary, 5th ed., VII, 350.

[78] Alain Daniélou, The Raga-s of Northern Indian Music (London: Barrie and Rockliff, 1968), pp. 22-24.

[79] Mellers, Caliban Reborn, p. 5.

[80] See Chapter III, above.

Messiaen by fruits and flowers, thus giving her the right to the appellation "Corolla") temporarily wishes to have her maid Brangäne killed,[81] but such malice is not, of course, ever contemplated or expressed through biting. Nevertheless, the Corolla-lady is somehow dangerous and, like Medusa, needs to be subdued. The beloved of Messiaen's Tristan trilogy has similarly been regarded by the lover as dangerous, and one function of the music and text has been to set to rest this nightmarish side of femininity so that love may flourish. This line perhaps as much as any other in Cinq Rechants shows how much Messiaen wants to get away from ordinary logical discourse and to achieve a level where one's thoughts and feelings are either communicated or hidden, as the case may be, through a kind of secret language. The choice of non-logical syntax, the introduction of the synthetic language, and even the use of sounds such as "t k t k" all fit into the pattern of the rejection of ordinary language which is displayed here.

The musical setting for this refrain is both melodic and harmonic, in contrast to the almost wholly melodic unison passages of the couplet. There are two melodic themes which set the two lines of poetry, "Fleur du bourdon tourne à mort" ("Droning flower turns toward death") and "Quatre lézards le grotte la pieuvre et la mort" ("Four lizards the grotto the octopus and death"); there is a third "theme" consisting of one tone reiterated, setting the line of poetry "Corolle qui mord deuxième garde à manger d'abord."

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[81] Beroul, pp. 45-46; Thomas of Britain, pp. 135-39; Gottfried von Strassburg, pp. 208-11.

The melodic theme setting "Fleur du bourdon tourne tourne tourne à mort" represents the meaning of the text at this point, for the music continually turns on the two tones, d#'' and c#''.

A theme with a wider ranging melodic line is chosen by Messiaen for "Quatre lézards la grotte la pieuvre et la mort." Begun by the first contralto, picked up by the second soprano, and finally carried to its highest point by the first soprano, the line rises and falls undulatingly. The line rises on "lézards," falls back slightly on "grotte," and rises again to its highest point, g♮'', on "pieu-" of "pieuvre"; on the word "mort," the line settles down to a c#''.

Underlying each of the tones in the melodic themes is a harmonic structure created partially by the convergence of contrapuntal lines; nevertheless, each of the chords created in this fashion has a genuine identity of its own. The chords are again Messiaen's thick and dissonant ones, once again defying conventional harmonic analysis. The first four chords have some similarities with one another--that is, the top two intervals in each of the chords are a perfect fourth and an augmented fourth; the lower two or three tones in each of the chords implies either an incomplete I^6 chord (spelled as an augmented fifth) or the first inversion of a V^7 chord (each in a different key for each chord). The fifth chord consists of superposed major seconds and major and minor thirds as is the sixth chord in the series. Both of these chords divide to imply two tonal centers, which for the fifth chord are B^b and E, and for the sixth chord F and B. The seventh chord in the series spells a seventh chord with a minor triad at the bottom and and augmented triad at the top, all built from the root of E with a major second (a^b-b^b) placed directly below the minor-augmented seventh chord. The eighth chord consists of the bitonal sounds of a I^6_4 chord in A and a V^7 chord in E^b. The ninth chord is a repetition of the fifth chord, while the tenth is a repetition of the fifth chord, while the tenth is a repetition of the eighth. The remainder of the chords are either repetitions of previous chords, or bitonal chords, or chords comprised of superposed intervals, usually dissonant and even clashing--with the most clashing being the intervals of the major and minor seconds. The four last chords consist of either eight or nine tones, superposed in thickly clustered intervals. The refrain, which is to be sung fast (_un_ _peu_ _vif_) and with the direction to sing it in a _brutal_ fashion, is perhaps one of the most difficult for the singers to perform because of the thick, dissonant chords which must be sung with speed and accuracy.

The word "doka" is sung by basses at the beginning of the refrain, underneath the chordal material. The "melody" for this word is either one tone or a severely limited number of tones. Often only the syllable "do" is heard, with each "do" separated from the others by rests. Also underneath the chords toward the close of the refrain, the text "Corolle qui mord deuxième garde à manger d'abord" is intoned by the tenors on a repeated c#' in sixteenth note values.

Reprise of the Refrain. The reprise of the refrain is almost identical to the refrain. There are five additional chords within the structure of the reprise, and these have been added to accommodate the repetition of the words "la pieuvre et la mort." The reprise rises higher than the refrain; while the high point of the refrain was a g♮'', the new high point of the reprise is a b♮''. Significantly, the highest point of the reprise occurs on the word "mort."

Couplet 2. The second couplet adds only a series of adjacent major seconds which move up and down simultaneously with the previously presented material. The seconds are sung by the second and third sopranos. Another spoken passage, by the tenors, consists of the familiar sounds "t k t k" and appears simultaneously with the rest of the material near the close of the couplet.

Coda. The coda repeats the "mayoma kalimolimo" section of the introduction, but omits "Tes yeux voyagent dans le passé" and "Mélodie solaire de corbeille courbe." There is, once again, a passage of the spoken sounds, the familiar "t k t k." The coda ends with the words "dans l'avenir," set to the repeated tones and the tritone vertical interval that had been used to set "dans la passé" in the introduction. Here, the future has the last word. The Tristan story, the story of the lovers does not end, but goes on into the future. As Mellers notes, "the same neutral tritone symbolizes the before and the after, of which we can have no certain knowledge."[82]

In Cinq Rechants, the musical material seems to come under tighter control and at the same time to be more economical than in either Harawi or Turangalila-Symphonie. The control and the economies are evidenced in the texture which is thinner than in either of the earlier works in the trilogy (large sections are completely monodic or unisonal) and they are also evidenced in the persistent use of the tritone which appears in virtually every important melodic theme in the work. Tighter control might also be seen in Messiaen's more consistent use of Indian rhythmic patterns and his notation of these rhythms in a precise metrical system which accounts for each sixteenth note value, instead of considering them as added values in irrational measures, as was done, for example, in Harawi. At the same time that these rhythmic values are more precisely notated, the inevitable wrench caused by the odd number of beats leads the listener away from regular "square" Western rhythms and a Western sense of time. The control and economy are especially seen in the fourth rechant, which is overwhelmingly tritonal both harmonically and melodically.

The form also is economical as well as lucid, depending as it does on the Renaissance form of Claude le Jeune's chansons in his collection, Le Printemps. Messiaen, like le Jeune, often repeats a refrain exactly as it had appeared before. In the couplet, however, where le Jeune would vary the section mainly by adding voices to the texture, Messiaen uses a variety of techniques, including the addition of totally new material to the previously existing musical material and also the transforming of previously used material by means of learned techniques such as diminution and augmentation. The introductions and codas are Messiaen's own additions to the form, and he keeps them as controlled and lucid as his couplets and refrains.

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[82] Mellers, Caliban Reborn, p. 103.

In contrast to the lucidity of the musical material, the poetic text in French is more disjunctive and more opaque than any of Messiaen's own previous texts for his music (e.g., _Trois Poèmes_, _Poèmes pour Mi_, _Chants de Terre et de Ciel_, and _Harawi_). Furthermore, in addition to the French text which is itself not easy to explicate, Messiaen adopts a synthetic language of his own creation which nearly defies all attempts to fathom whatever meaning may be present. Finally, he adds the spoken sounds "t k t k" to the other elements of his poetry--sounds which may be intended to imitate those made by birds, insects, and animals, or even more aptly, the tic-toc of the clock of the past and the future. The rejection of logical meanings and normal syntactical constructions may show both a desire to keep some thoughts private and also a desire to show that only in a language which aspires to the nonverbal state of music can the deepest feelings be expressed.

The text, or at least those portions accessible to explication, balances images which can be classified as positive and negative, with the positive ones neutralizing the force of the negative ones and effectively defusing them. Fearful images associated with death are juxtaposed with life-affirming ones; dark is mitigated by light; and the enclosing and limiting qualities of love--some even claustrophobic in nature--are balanced by the freedom and expansiveness which love brings. If disintegration occurs under the shattering force of love, reintegration is bound to occur, say the poems of *Cinq Rechants* in their analysis of the meaning of the relationship of Tristan and Isolde.

Throughout *Cinq Rechants*, Messiaen's own text is married to his equally personal musical language. He analyzes the Tristan myth by taking it apart in his Surrealist pseudo-Sanskrit language, and then puts it together in ways not thought of by other poets and composers--ways which are roughly analogous to the way a Synthetic Cubist painter puts together his paintings and collages. Messiaen's ways of analyzing and synthesizing are unique also among those rare beings who combine both functions of poet and composer. He achieves a kind of kaleidoscopic shifting of planes and surfaces, capturing an elusive meaning of verbal text within the "deforming prism" of his musical language, now depending more heavily on the tritone for his melodic and harmonic material and on Indian *talas* for his rhythmic material.

Perhaps the economy and the brevity of this work make it his most successful one in the creation of a musical structure which is concomitant with the basic metaphors of his mythic material, since the economy points both to the enclosing nature of love and the paradoxical freedom which can be gained through limitation to a one-to-one relationship. The economy points as well to the integration of both psychological and artistic matters. And the brevity of the work and its fast tempo provide an analogue, as Messiaen has already stated, for "the dramatic brevity of life."[83] In all of his works Messiaen has struggled with the problem of Time, and he has achieved great success in destroying and transcending the inexorable sense of Western chronological or "clock" time in his music. His choice of a brief, fast-paced work to represent the brevity of life does not mean that Messiaen has abdicated from an eschatological stance, but merely that he has faced up to the abyss which may be Time, the grace of God, human misery, or the sense of one's own uselessness, and that he has accepted the inevitability of earthly mortality. Human love, like life itself, is given its meaning through the knowledge of its fragility.

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[83] Messiaen's record jacket notes for Cinq Rechants (MHS 1187).

CHAPTER VIII

CONCLUSION

No amount of analysis can recapture the experience provided through the hearing of the music from the Tristan trilogy. Description may even seem gratuitous in the face of Messiaen's more adequate modes of expressing emotion and of analyzing myth. However, the methodology pursued in this study assumes the primacy of the art form and of the musical experience, both of which, it seems to me, may be supplemented and illuminated by phenomenological and structural analysis.

As noted in the earlier chapters, the songs of Harawi in particular are capable of being viewed musically as a series of problems to be solved. Similar observations may be applied, of course, to the music of Turangalîla-Symphonie and Cinq Rechants. Hence each movement of the symphony contains one or more sets of problems to be solved, which reach a final solution at the close. Cinq Rechants, though less complex, may be similarly viewed. In a sense, therefore, the three works also together provide a series of contrasts within the triptych of the Tristan trilogy, which is itself brought to a musical solution at the end of Cinq Rechants.

The problems with which Messiaen deals are not entirely musical, however, for his music here always retains a reference to the mythic core or armature--i.e., to the Tristan myth which inspired the trilogy. Hence in very clear terms Harawi sets forth those problematical elements of temporal love illustrated in the Tristan story, which juxtaposes joy and overwhelming despair, ecstasy and debilitating fear. In Song II, we are invited to stare down into the abyss of despair; in Song IX, we are confronted with death itself: "Death is there." And in Songs V and XI, we hear the terrifying words "Cut off my head." Thus, although the close of the cycle finds the lovers calmly together "dans le noir" while the village sleeps, the resolution of the conflict seems to have been won at some cost and may prove to be an unstable solution. Therefore Messiaen leaves the way open for a continuation of his treatment of the Tristan story and of love in the next work, Turangalîla-Symphonie.

In Turangalîla-Symphonie, elements of fear are strangely mingled with elements of love and joy. The fearful statue theme is set off against the flower theme and the haunting theme of love. But movements V and X bring ecstatic consummation along with a release of tension. Here the solution to the problems posed by the myth seems more lasting; it is as if the really terrifying aspects of love (which must assuredly be present for Messiaen) are shown to have the possibility of being laid to rest. Here as in Harawi, Time, which is symbolic of conscience and of conventional and authoritarian values, is transformed through elaborate permutations of rhythmic schemes that in certain movements of the symphony create a sense of timelessness. Thus are the threatening elements associated with love exorcized.

Finally, in *Cinq Rechants*, there are reminders of the threatening and even enclosing aspects of love, but here the negative elements are so neatly balanced or ever *over-balanced* by positive ones that they no longer retain their former force or their threatening qualities. The lovers, though sometimes confined to their prison of air, are able to fly off into space and into freedom. Thus love, though it is at first a source of disintegration, is ultimately integrating. In the end, therefore, Time and its threatening aspects have been thoroughly neutralized in a work in which brevity and fast tempos are symbolic of the brevity of life. Such symbolism is indicative of a kind of acceptance and even of comfort.

In the first two parts of the Tristan trilogy the principle of enchainment is a further unifying factor. Within the songs of *Harawi*, the principle operates chiefly in the enchaining chords, which keep one or more common tones and move upward or downward by means of adjacent steps. In *Turangalîla-Symphonie*, the enchaining principle is chiefly evidenced in the links between movements forged by the recurring themes--statue, flower, and theme of love. However, in *Cinq Rechants*, enchainment is almost entirely lacking, while its functions are taken over by the persistent use of the tritone.

All three works are also linked together in a kind of tense union through both musical techniques and imagery expressed through the texts or musical expression as explained in program notes by the composer. The musical links include, of course, Messiaen's melodic methods and materials, his harmonic practices, his rhythmic inventions, and his formal structures. The first of these for all three works involves the use of his own modal system, which he uses freely and without rigid consistency. There is as much total chromaticism or atonality as there is modality, and there is a persistency of the tritone which increases to an unprecedented extent when we reach *Cinq Rechants*. When we examine Messiaen's themes, we find that they are made up primarily of nontertian and dissonant intervals. Furthermore, they are assembled, one theme following another, in the additive manner of troubadour songs, which link individual themes just as individual pieces are added to a mosaic.

The harmonies common to all three works in the trilogy are either chord structures derived from Messiaen's modes or chord structures which are so thick as to partake of total chromaticism. Some chords defy placement in any other category than that of polytonality, although this involves the use of a term to which Messiaen does not give full approval. The other types of chords found in all three works are those delineated by David Drew as being made up of superpositions or created through added tones, chiefly those of the added sixth and the added augmented fourth.[1]

Messiaen's rhythmic practices, though remaining basically the same for all parts of the trilogy, are found in each to possess subtle differences. The similarities are in the use of non-retrogradable rhythms, Hindu rhythmic patterns, and complex systems of augmentation and diminution. The differences are largely in the matter of degree to which each is used in the three works. *Turangalîla-Symphonie* is seen to be the most complex in terms of elaborate systems of rhythmic permutations, while *Cinq Rechants* is perhaps the least complex in this respect. *Harawi* abounds in the use of added values, which create irrational measures, and in the use of many free, unbarred passages which represent the freedom of bird songs. Neither *Turangalîla-Symphonie* nor *Cinq Rechants*, however, are allowed the "indulgence" of added values or unbarred passages, since in these all note values are carefully accounted for in the metrical markings for each measure. Perhaps the difficulty of keeping together a larger ensemble than simply a soloist and accompanist dictates the tighter notation of the symphony and the choral work.

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[1] Drew, pt. I, p. 39.

The formal structure of each of the three works does not, of course, remain constant, but is varied with the choice of vehicle, whether it be a vocal cycle for solo soprano and piano accompaniment, a symphony with piano and Ondes Martenot solos, or a composition for unaccompanied chorus. The two vocal works which form the side panels of the triptych seem to partake of the additive method of building structure, with mosaics of themes being accumulated. The song forms of *Harawi* are varied and complex, while the *rechant* form of *Cinq Rechants* seems almost flat in its regular alternation of couplets and refrains, with the occasional addition of an introduction and a coda. But it is in Turangalîla-Symphonie that Messiaen's gift for inventing complex forms is given full scope. There he is able, during the length of one movement--the fourth--to encompass nine different sections, in which he uses traditional symphonic forms such as the Scherzo in untraditional ways. In fact, each of the ten movements of the symphony involves some kind of experimentation with either a regular symphonic form or a form which the composer has forged for himself.

The development, generally eschewed in Harawi and Cinq Rechants except for development by elimination, nevertheless is found in the symphony. Here, however, Messiaen develops in his own way, often through elaborate systems of augmenting and diminishing the themes. There is also a certain amount of fragmenting and retrograding of thematic material in all three works, though this is done to a lesser extent in the vocal works and to a greater extent in the symphony.

Recurring imagery in the trilogy includes such items as the star, the abyss, fruit and flowers, earth, death, the philter, the fan, and water, each of which is important in some way to all three.

The Tristan story as traditionally understood thus provides the focus for an immensely complex series of musical structures. Messiaen's major concerns are with transcendence, with time, and with immortality. The diverse elements which find their way into these structures come from various sources as remote from the Western cultural tradition as Hindu rhythms and ancient Peruvian folklore. In the final analysis, the composer's Tristan trilogy is an attempt to achieve music of cosmic dimensions.

The completing of the Tristan trilogy by Messiaen brings to a close an epoch in the composer's life and art. Though he will again use musical material which is similar to that found in the trilogy, he has not since the 1940's published any music which sets his own poetry, nor has he written another "song of love" *per se*. Though he continues to write the most lucid program notes of any commentator on his own music, his return to vocal music in the massive *La Transfiguration de Notre-Seigneur Jésus-Christ* does not utilize a poetic text but instead draws upon selections from Scripture and from other religious or liturgical literature.

Messiaen divides his life's work into four categories:

1. The series of compositions based on the myth of Tristan and Isolde which has been the subject of this study.
2. Works based on rhythmic researches.
3. Works based on the songs of birds.
4. Works which have religious or theological programs, based on the texts of Holy Scriptures.[2]

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[2] Olivier Messiaen, "Olivier Messiaen," *Dictionnaire de la*

Of these, he has continued to work in the latter three categories since the completion of the Tristan trilogy in 1948.

Works based on rhythmic researches since 1948 include *Quatre Études de rythme* (1949-50), *Livre d'orgue* (1951), and *Chronochromie* (1960). *Livre d'orgue*, however, in fact partly fits also into other categories since the two movements entitled "Les Mains de l'Abîme" ("Hands of the Abyss") and "Les Yeux dans les Roues" ("Eyes in the Wheels") are inspired by Scripture. The first utilizes a phrase which the composer has taken from the prophet Habakkuk (*Habakkuk* 3:10), while the second makes reference to the wheels which the prophet Ezekiel saw turning in the air and which contained "rings ...full of eyes" (*Ezekiel* 1:18). Another movement, "Chants d'oiseaux," is written, according to Messiaen, in the language of the songs of the blackbird, the song-thrush, and the nightingale.[3] But the most striking thing about the work remains its rhythmic complexity. The movement entitled "Pièce en Trio" is described by Mari: "Three independent lines are juxtaposed in which two of them articulate the 'inversions' of the rhythmic formulas; the third, forming the thematic element, is consigned to the pedal."[4] In the last movement, "Soixante-Quatre Durées," the composer utilizes sixty-four different time values. These

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musique, ed. Marc Honegger (Bordas, 1970), II, 713.

[3] Mari, p. 86.

[4] *Ibid.*, p. 87.

rhythmic subtleties ought to be perceived by the listener, according to Messiaen.[5] Elsewhere, however, he has admitted that this piece pushes human perception of long and short durations to the limits.[6]

Quatre Études de rythme (1949-50) includes two movements called "Ile de feu I" and "Ile de feu II," which are "dedicated to Papua (New Guinea)."[7] Both movements are characterized by a violence of emotion, said to be evoked by "magic cults" of the country to which they are dedicated. In writing "Neumes rythmiques," the composer has tried to find analogues in modern rhythms for the neumes of plainchant, and this piece constitutes a kind of rhythmic game, albeit played very intensely. However, it is in "Mode de valeurs et d'intensités" that Messiaen uses a rhythmic system in its most consistent and disciplined form, as Stuart Waumsley observes.[8] Waumsley explains the rhythmic organization of the movement as follows: "It is based on the twelve-tone chromatic scale to which each note is assigned one of twelve graded durations, one of twelve graded dynamic intensities, and one of twelve graded accents. Each note retains its respective duration, intensity, and accent throughout the piece."[9] Waumsley and others such as Nicholas Armfelt have pointed out the implications of "Mode de valeurs et d'intensités" for later works by other composers (e.g., Pierre Boulez, Jean Barraque, Karlheinz Stockhausen). "Mode de valeurs et d'intensités" opened the way, as Armfelt notes, for "complex serial works...in which the conjunction of the various elements was too complex to be imagined in detail before hand. So Messiaen's piece has historical importance in two related developments of music: total serialism and music of chance."[10] But for Armfelt, as for many others, the real significance of the work "is its beauty: the low notes like night, the notes above sparkling like fireworks."[11]

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[5] Olivier Messiaen, Lecture in Brussels (Exposition Internationale de Bruxelles, 1958), as quoted in Waumsley, p. 49.

[6] See ibid., p. 49.

[7] Messiaen's record jacket notes for Four Studies in Rhythm (Musical Heritage MHS 1069).

[8] Waumsley, p. 45.

The orchestral work Chronochromie, although listed by the composer as one of his works of rhythmic complexity, also falls within the bird song genre, since he lists the names of twenty-seven different birds of Japan, Mexico, and France whose songs he has included within the musical material of this symphonic "suite." Messiaen explains the rhythmic and melodic material as follows: "The 'temporal' or rhythmic material consists of 32 different durations which are used in symmetrical interversions, while always retaining their original order. The permutations thus obtained are heard either separately and fragmentarily, or superposed three by three."[12] The structure, taken from the choric ode in ancient Greek tragedy, consists of the following sections: Introduction, Strophe I, Antistrophe I, Strophe II, Antistrophe II, Epode, and Coda. The significance of the title Chronochromie is that the composer's interests in color and time are brought together; thus the symphonic suite may be said to depict the color of time. The texture of the work is extremely thick and for this reason it requires such intensity of listening that some have found it hard to cope with. Thus Armfelt suggests that sections which are sometimes thought to be failures such as "the eighteen-part birdsong polyphony for solo strings in the Epode section" do in fact have a tremendous effect.[13]

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[9] Ibid.

[10] Nicholas Armfelt, "Emotion in the Music of Messiaen," The Musical Times, CVI (1965), 856.

[11] Ibid.

Though Messiaen's researches in bird song may be traced back to 1928, the use of such material in the post-Tristan trilogy period has become more precise in that songs of specific birds from various geographical regions have become the basis for compositions. These later works, beginning with Le Reveil des oiseaux (1953) and continuing with Oiseaux exotiques (1955), Catalogue d'oiseaux (1956 and 1958), and Sept Haïkaï (1963), have indeed added a new dimension to the composer's corpus. Catalogue d'oiseaux is for solo piano alone while the other three works are written for piano and large or small orchestra. In the Tristan trilogy, the piano usually "sang" the high pitched, multi-noted passages representing the bird songs. Now in the works using orchestra, the bird songs are also carried by other bright, shimmering instruments (e.g., by the xylophone, the flute, or the English horn). But it is the piano which nevertheless continues to carry the greatest amount of bird song material. This versatile instrument alternates with, or combines with other instruments indefatigably to imitate more birds than any other instrument. By means of these combinations of piano with other instruments, Messiaen achieves in both Le Reveil des oiseaux and Oiseaux exotiques what one writer has aptly called "dazzling sonorities," which are reached "often by the compiling of layers of sound."[14]

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[12] Messiaen's record jacket notes for Chronochromie (Angel S-36295).

[13] Armfelt, p. 857.

In contrast to the more general use of bird song material in Harawi and Turangalîla-Symphonie, these later bird song works utilize the names of specific and often very unusual or exotic birds. For example, Oiseaux exotiques draws upon the songs of forty-seven birds, including the Indian Minah, the Lesser Green Leafbird from Malaysia, the Serin from the Canary Islands, and the Orange-winged Amazon from South America. Catalogue d'oiseaux lists thirteen birds as titles for the separate pieces which make up the entire composition, but numerous other birds' songs appear within each section. Much labor has gone into notating the original songs of the birds, but the process for Messiaen is not a mechanical one. His own responses have also played an important role in the transcribing of the songs of the birds. For example, in "La Chouette Hulotte" ("The Tawny Owl") from Catalogue d'oiseaux, Messiaen seems to hear not only the natural and ordinary cry of the bird but also a cry of terror like the sound of a "child being murdered."[15]

---

[14] Phillip Ramey's record jacket notes for Oiseaux exotiques (Candide CE 31002).

Sept Haïkaï (1963), seven short pieces for piano, percussion ensemble, and small orchestra, was written by Messiaen following a trip to Japan. The work thus celebrates the birds of Japan, among them the uguiso, a songbird that has two songs; the hibari, a Japanese meadow sparrow; and the oruri, a blue Japanese fly eater. Messiaen's penchant for interesting effects of instrumental coloration is displayed in these seven pieces, since each piece or section of a piece emphasizes a different instrument or group of instruments; now the metallic sounds of xylophone and marimba come to the fore, and again, the woodwinds and brass predominate. Messiaen chooses some unusual instruments for Sept Haïkaï, among them the cencerros (little bells) and the crotales (clappers). Indian rhythms and complex rhythmic canons are again present.

---

[15] Olivier Messiaen, Catalogue d'oiseaux (Paris: Leduc), Vol. III: Prefatory Note to "La Chouette Hulotte."

Finally, those works with religious or theological titles, having programs based on writings of Holy Scripture or the liturgy, make up the fourth category of Messiaen's compositions. These include the following which have been composed since the completion of the Tristan trilogy: *Messe de la Pentecôte* (1950), *Couleurs de la cité céleste* (1964), *Et Expecto Resurrectionem Mortuorum* (1965), and the massive choral-orchestral work, *La Transfiguration de Notre-Seigneur Jésus-Christ* (1968).

The *Messe de la Pentecôte*. a work for organ, again cuts across three categories, though it depends predominantly on religious or theological texts for its programmatic basis; however, it also involves great rhythmic complexity and includes many bird songs in its melodic material. Waumsley notes that the principle of rhythmic "interversions" is especially important in the "Offertoire" of *Messe de la Pentecôte* in which

> thirty "interversions" are presented three at a time. They are based on five "durées chromatiques," the semiquaver being the basic unit. The durations, in semiquaver values, of the first three "interversions" presented simultaneously in the manuals and the pedals are:
>
> (i) in the upper stave: 1 2 3 4 5
> (ii) in the middle stave: 5 4 1 2 3
> (iii) in the pedal: 3 5 1 2 4
>
> The whole section is built on successive permutations

> of these values and no arrangement is repeated again.[16]

Waumsley also notes that bird song is used in *Messe de la Pentecôte* both "to create a mood," as in "Communion," and, in combination with "a strictly organized system of 'durées chromatiques'," to create a sense of order and freedom, as in "Sortie," the final section of the work.[17]

Both *Couleurs de la cité céleste* and *Et Expecto Resurrectionem Mortuorum* are related to *Turangalîla-Symphonie* in their use of unusual instrumental groupings and their heavy utilization of numerous and exotic percussion instruments. *Couleurs de la cité céleste* is written for piano, percussion, and small orchestra, and revolves around five texts from the book of *Revelations*, each of which mentions one or more of the familiar symbols that Messiaen loves--bright colors, light, a star, a rainbow, angels, and trumpets. The rich and exotic instrumental coloration, which includes shivering crashes of the tam-tam, is said by the composer to be symbolic not only of actual colors but also of "the Celestial City and of Him who dwells there."[18]

Et Expecto Resurrectionem Mortuorum again affirms the faith which Messiaen had earlier proclaimed when he said, "I was born believing...."[19] The work, based on texts from the Psalms, the Gospel of John, *Revelations*, and the books of *Romans*, *I Corinthians*, and *Job*, is written for an orchestra made up of three ensembles: woodwind, brass, and percussion instruments. Among the percussion instruments are included tuned cowbells, tubular bells, six gongs, and three tam-tams. In the first four movements, thickly scored passages like much of *Turangalîla-Symphonie* are alternated with haunting unaccompanied solo passages by clarinet and English horn. Deafening crashes by the tam-tam are heard. In the fifth movement, entitled "And I heard the voice of a great multitude" (*Revelations* 19:6), the woodwinds, brasses, and percussion instruments combine in a shattering *tutti* and then close on a long-held chord which seems to linger into infinity.

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[16] Waumsley, p. 46.

[17] *Ibid.*, p. 48.

[18] Messiaen's record jacket notes for *Couleurs de la cité céleste* (Columbia MS 7356).

In *La Transfiguration de Notre-Seigneur Jésus-Christ*, all of the elements of Messiaen's musical language, including his use of modes, bird songs, and complex rhythms, combine with a scriptural and theological text to create a powerful emotional statement which comprises his most unified religious vision thus far. Utilizing a huge chorus (Messiaen specifies that there be one hundred singers--a number that contrasts sharply with the twelve singers of *Cinq Rechants*); a very large orchestra with eighteen woodwinds, seventeen brasses, sixty-six strings, and six percussionists playing a total of nineteen different instruments; seven instrumental soloists including piano, flute, clarinet, violoncello, marimba, xylophone, and xylorimba; and two vocal soloists, tenor and bass. The scriptural texts begin with the passage from *Matthew* 17 which describes how Christ took his disciples up into a high mountain where he appeared to them with Moses and Elijah. According to the scriptural account utilized in Messiaen's first recitation by the choir, Christ there "was transfigured before them: and his face did shine as the sun, and his raiment was white as the light" (*Matthew* 17:2). Appropriately, the other texts which Messiaen has assembled from Scripture, the Apocrypha, the liturgy, and the *Summa Theologica* of St. Thomas Aquinas introduce images of light, mountains, tabernacles, "the glorified bodies" of Christ and his followers--all related to the mystical experience of the Transfiguration. A text from the apocryphal *Wisdom of Solomon* (7:26)--"For Wisdom is the brightness of the everlasting light"--is reiterated like a verbal *cantus firmus*. Bird songs of France, North America, Spain, Greece, Australia, and Africa are woven into the melodic materials of the music. Here the birds are represented by various instruments, among them the piano, flute, xylorimba, marimba, and woodwind ensemble. The free, unbarred passages are given to the piano solo, while the orchestral instruments, particularly the percussion, are given the most complex rhythmic permutations. The portions for chorus are not so complex rhythmically and are carefully marked with metrical signs such as $\frac{3\quad 2}{16}$, $\frac{2\ 3\ 2}{16}$, and $\frac{2\ 2\ 1}{16}$ to facilitate ensemble singing. Passages of plainchant are interspersed with melodies made up of wide-ranging dissonant intervals to bring together in one work a kind of timeless union of ancient and modern melodic practices. The instrumental coloration is the most ingenious thus far, including high harmonics played by the violins as well as sounds resembling Chinese wind-chimes produced by triangle trills. The last movement of the work combines voices and instruments in what Messiaen calls a "*total fortissimo*."[20]

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[19] Samuel, p. 11.

History's final assessment of Messiaen's Tristan trilogy and of his other works is, of course, yet to be seen. Criticism of his work to date has ranged from the ecstatically favorable to the hysterically damning. He has been called at once tedious and "the most intriguing of modern French composers."[21] His use of ostinatos can be monotonously boring or hypnotically entrancing, depending on the listener. He has been accused of indulging in a "gargantuan emotional excess on a Wagnerian scale."[22] During his deepest alienation from his former teacher, Pierre Boulez was said to have labelled Messiaen's work "brothel music."[23] But Messiaen's allegedly excessive use of mathematical formulae and intellectual devices has also brought forth the frequent complaint that he is too much of an obscurantist.

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[20] Messiaen's record jacket notes for *La Transfiguration de Notre-Seigneur Jésus-Christ* (Decca Headline 1 and 2).

[21] W. L. Sumner, "The French Organ School," *Hinrichsen's Musical Year Book*, VI (1949-50), 293.

[22] Smalley, p. 128.

[23] Peter Heyworth, "Taking Leave of Predecessors--I," *The*

However, at the present time he has earned his place as one of France's leading composers. Those who had previously criticized his work sharply have now in general all come around to the position that Messiaen is a great and unique talent. Jacques Charpentier perhaps sums up the view of the majority of musically sensitive people when he says: "Olivier Messiaen remains for me the greatest living musician of his generation. He alone has the talent and the will to awaken in us the feeling for the Absolute--a feeling which we long for in the great sensibilities of our souls and hearts."[24] But of all of Messiaen's works, it is the Tristan trilogy which is pivotal, since it is the culmination of his previous work and a point of departure for all his subsequent compositions. The Tristan trilogy is also the category of his own work that Messiaen himself[25] considers to be his greatest musical achievement.

New Yorker, March 24, 1973, p. 45.

[24] "Hommage à Messiaen," Melos, XXV (1958), 387.

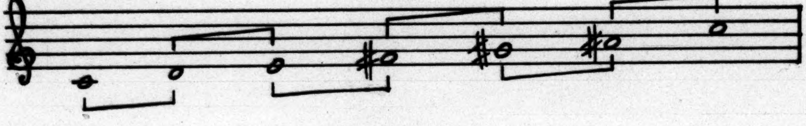
[25] See Samuel, p. 147.

APPENDIX

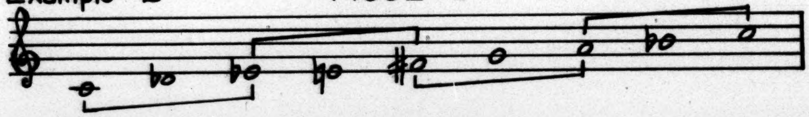
MUSICAL EXAMPLES

Examples from Harawi are reprinted with the special permission of Alphonse Leduc & Cie, Owners and Publishers, Paris. Examples from Turangalîla-Symphonie appear with the authorization of Durand & Cie, Editeurs-Proprietaires, Paris. Examples from Cinq Rechants are reproduced with the kind permission of Editions Salabert, the holder of the copyright.

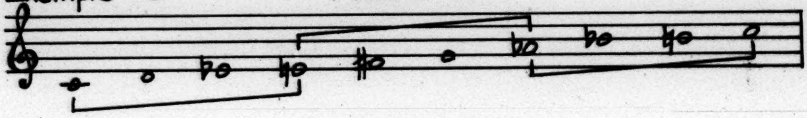
Example 1 MODE 1



Example 2 MODE 2



Example 3 MODE 3



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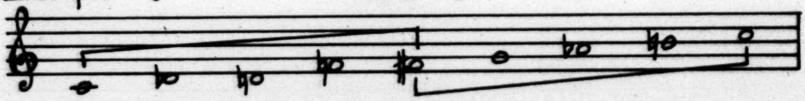

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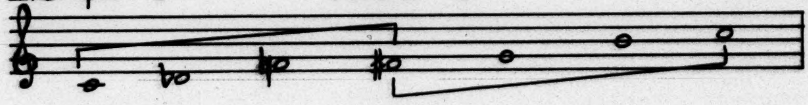

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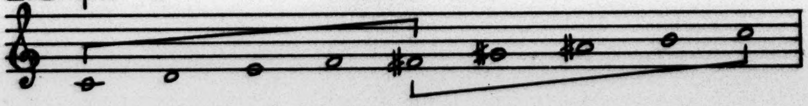

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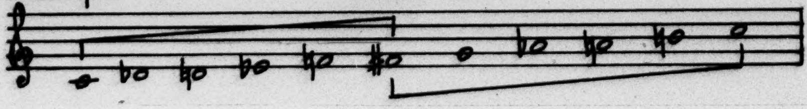
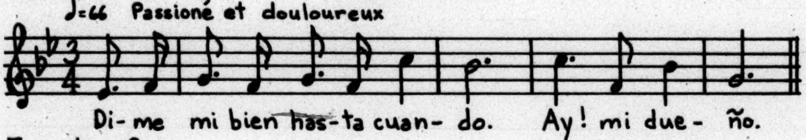


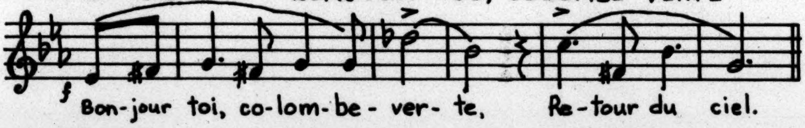
Example 8

DELIRIO


♩=66 Passioné et douloureux
Di-me mi bien has-ta cuan- do. Ay! mi due- ño.

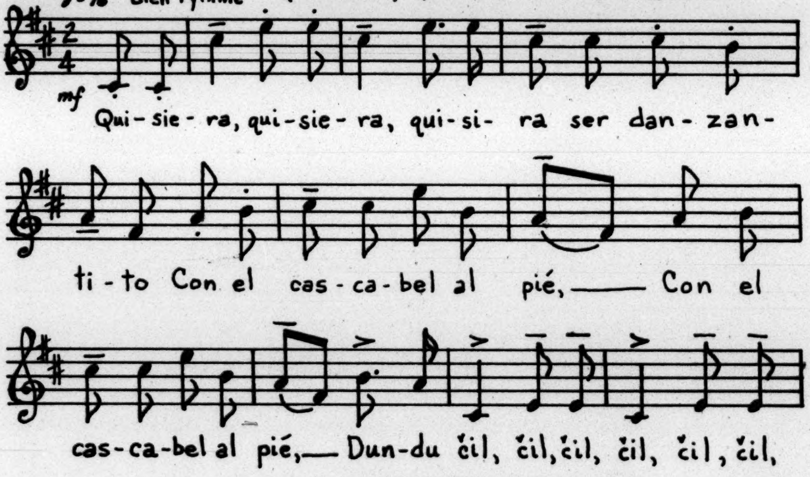
Example 9

BONJOUR TOI, COLOMBE VERTE

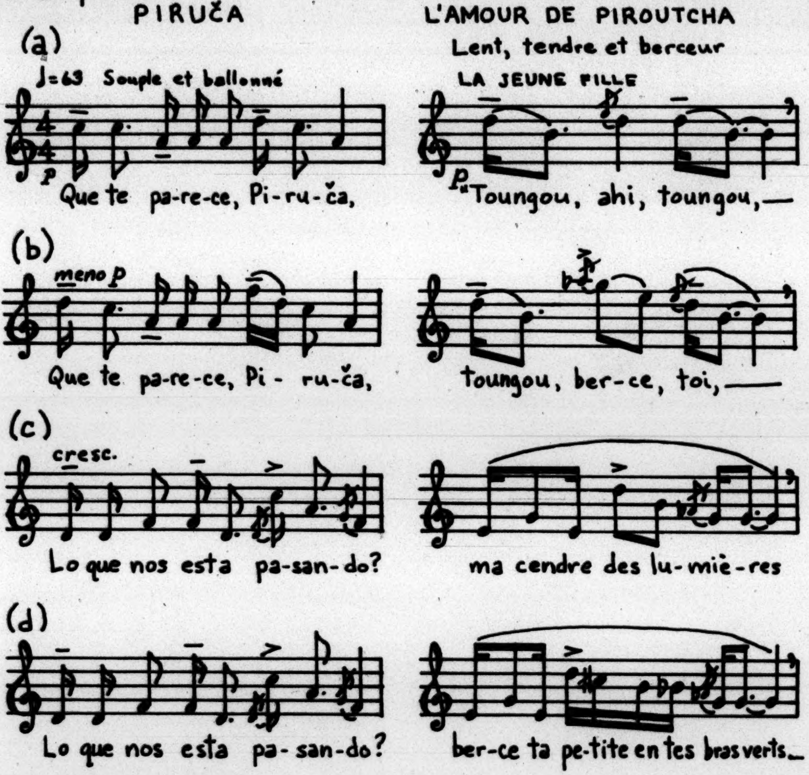

Tres Modéré
f
Bon-jour toi, co-lom-be- ver- te, Re-tour du ciel.

Example 10

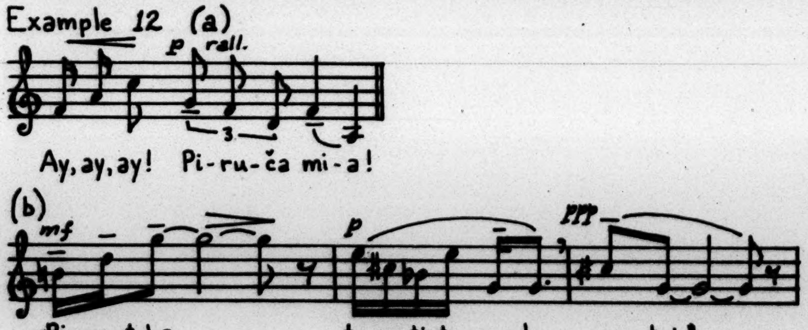
QUISIERA, QUISIERA SER DANZANTITO


♩=96 Bien rythme
mf
Qui-sie- ra, qui-sie- ra, qui-si- ra ser dan- zan-
ti - to Con el cas - ca - bel al pié, —— Con el
cas-ca-bel al pié, — Dun-du čil, čil, čil, čil, čil, čil,
čil! doux Pa - ra bai- lar con mi no-via, Des-de aho-
raal a- ma - ne- cer, — Dun- du čil, čil, čil, čil, čil, čil, čil!

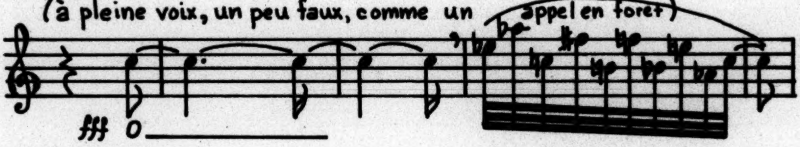
Example 11


PIRUČA
L'AMOUR DE PIROUTCHA
(a)
♩=63 Souple et ballonné
Lent, tendre et berceur
LA JEUNE FILLE
p
Que te pa-re-ce, Pi-ru-ča,
p
"Toungou, ahi, toungou,—
(b)
meno p
Que te pa-re-ce, Pi - ru-ča,
toungou, ber-ce, toi,—
(c)
cresc.
Lo que nos esta pa-san-do?
ma cendre des lu-miè-res
(d)
Lo que nos esta pa-san-do?
ber-ce ta pe-tite en tes bras verts.—

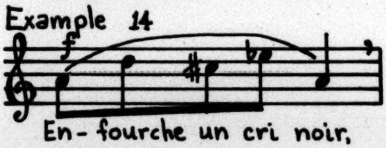
Example 12 (a)


p
rall.
3
Ay, ay, ay! Pi-ru-ča mi-a!
(b)
mf
p
ppp
Pi-routcha,—
ta pe-ti-te cendre, pour toi."—

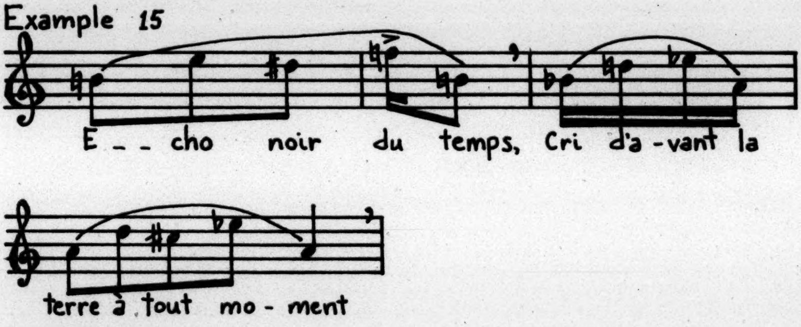
Example 13


(à pleine voix, un peu faux, comme un appel en forêt)
fff O

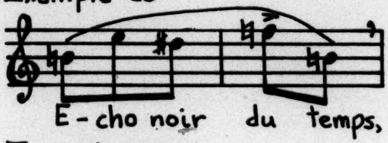
Example 14


f
En- fourche un cri noir,

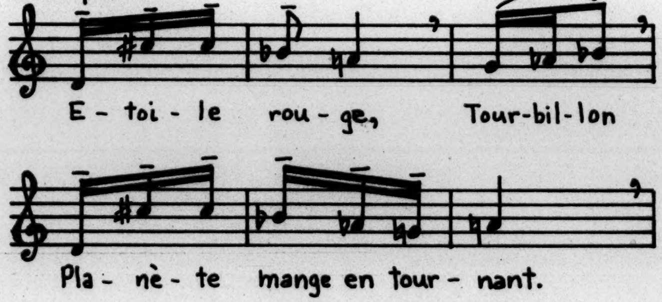
Example 15


E - - cho noir du temps, Cri d'a-vant la
terre à tout mo - ment

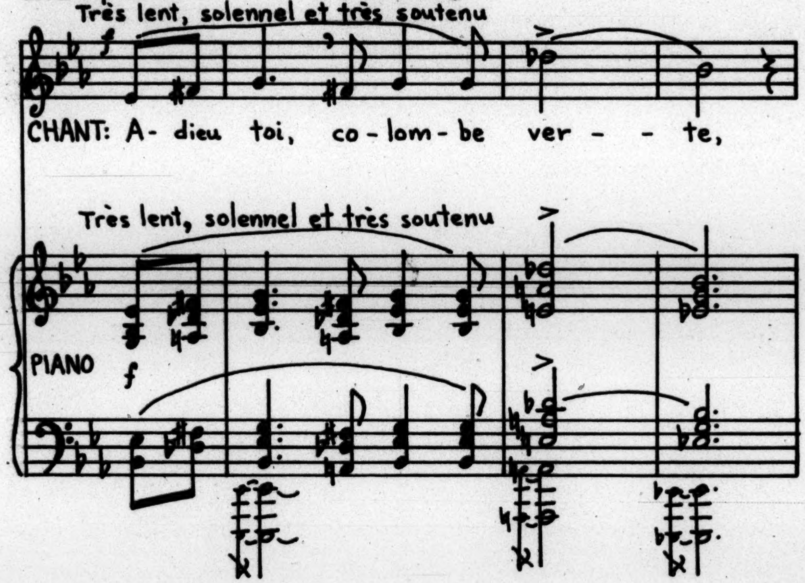
Example 16


E-cho noir du temps,

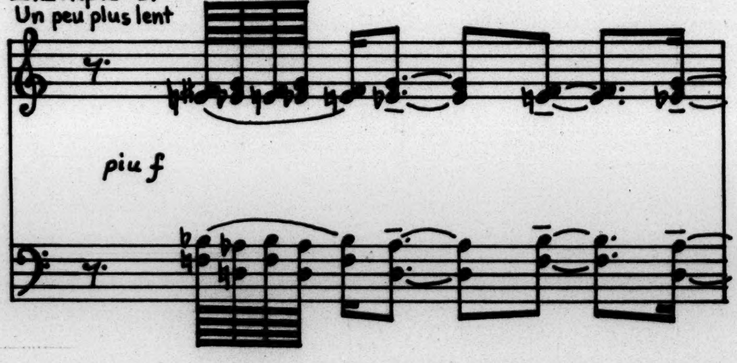
Example 17


E - toi - le rou - ge, Tour-bil-lon
Pla - nè - te mange en tour - nant.

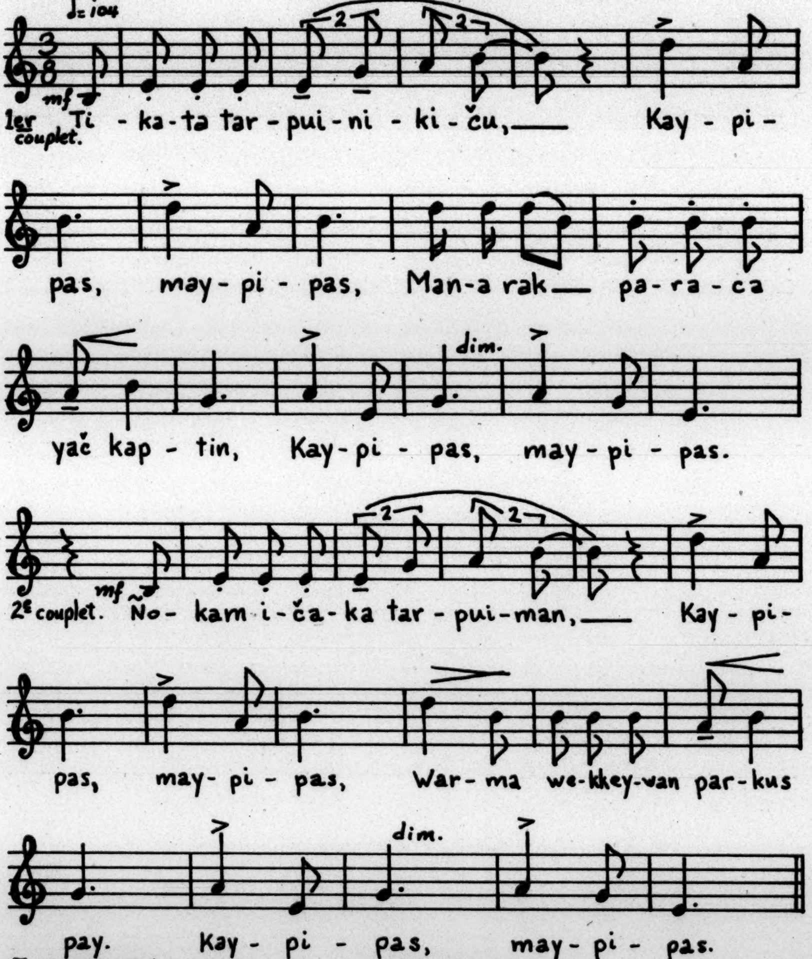
Example 18 ADIEU


Très lent, solennel et très soutenu
CHANT: A- dieu toi, co-lom-be ver- - te,
Très lent, solennel et très soutenu
PIANO
f

Example 19

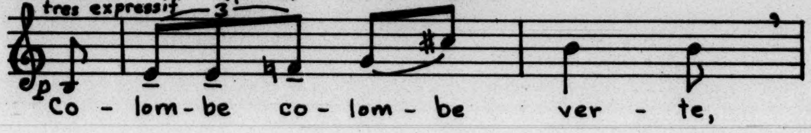

Un peu plus lent
piu f

Example 20 TIKATA TARPUINIKIČU

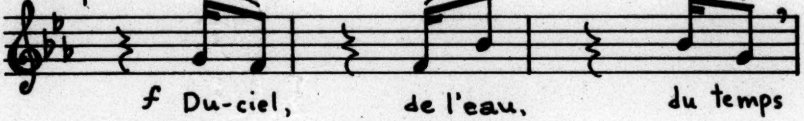

♩= 104
mf
1er couplet.
Ti - ka-ta tar - pui - ni - ki - ču, ___ Kay - pi -
pas, may - pi - pas, Man-a rak ___ pa - ra - ca
yač kap - tin, Kay - pi - pas, may - pi - pas.
dim.
mf
2e couplet. Ño - kam i - ča - ka tar - pui - man, ___ Kay - pi -
pas, may - pi - pas, War - ma we-kkey-van par - kus
pay. Kay - pi - pas, may - pi - pas.
dim.

Example 21 SYLLABES

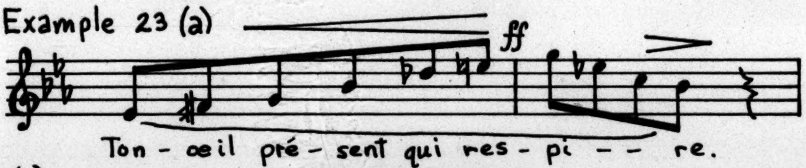
Très modéré


tres expressif
(pour 2)
3
p
Co - lom - be co - lom - be ver - te,

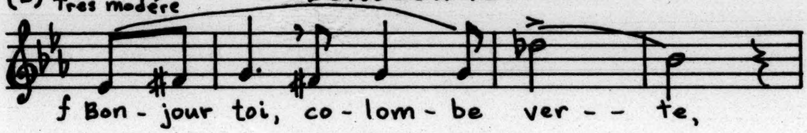
Example 22


f Du-ciel, de l'eau, du temps

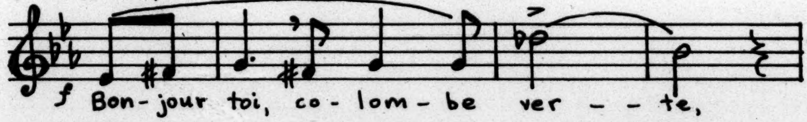
Example 23 (a)


ff
Ton - oeil pré - sent qui res - pi - - - re.

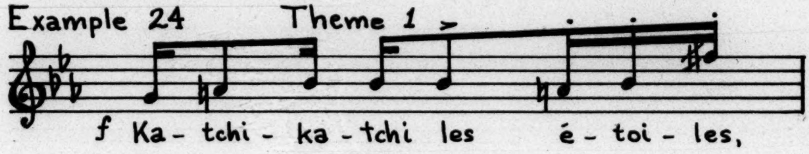
(b) Très modéré BONJOUR TOI


f Bon - jour toi, co - lom - be ver - - te,

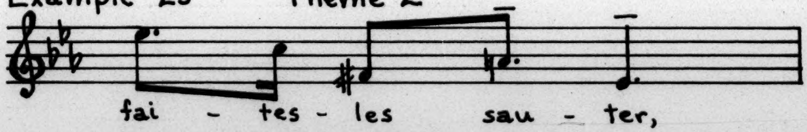
(c) Très lent, solennel DANS LE NOIR


f Bon - jour toi, co - lom - be ver - - te,

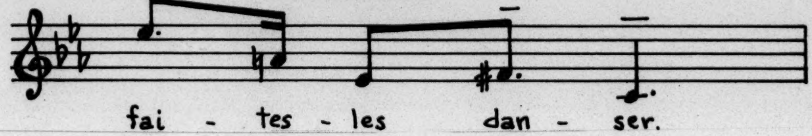
Example 24 Theme 1


f Ka - tchi - ka - tchi les é - toi - les,

Example 25 Theme 2

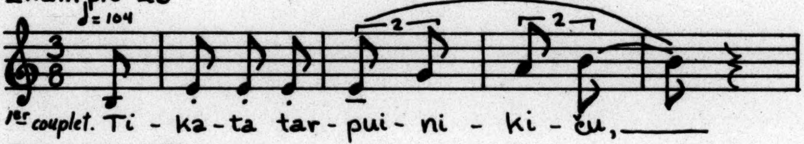

fai - tes - les sau - ter,

Theme 3

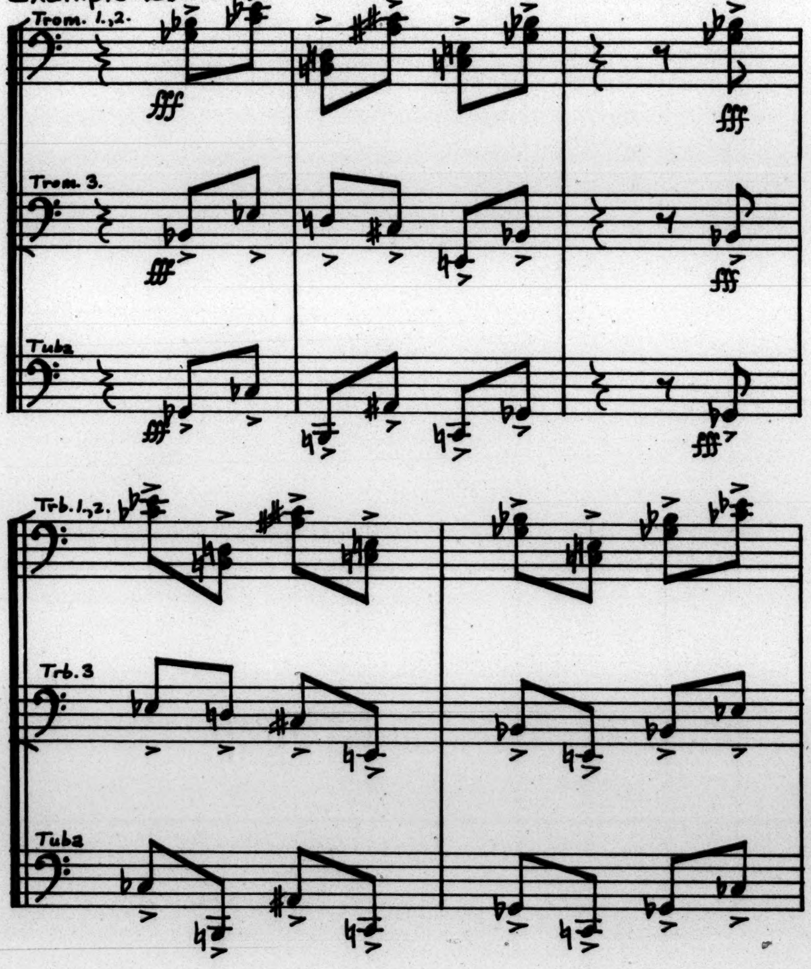

fai - tes - les dan - ser.

TIKATA TARPUINIKIČU...

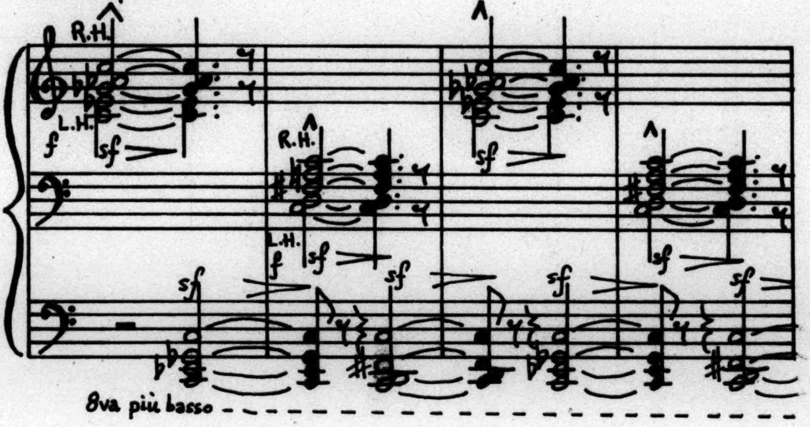
Example 26


♩= 104
3/8
2
2
1er couplet. Ti - ka - ta tar - pui - ni - ki - ču,

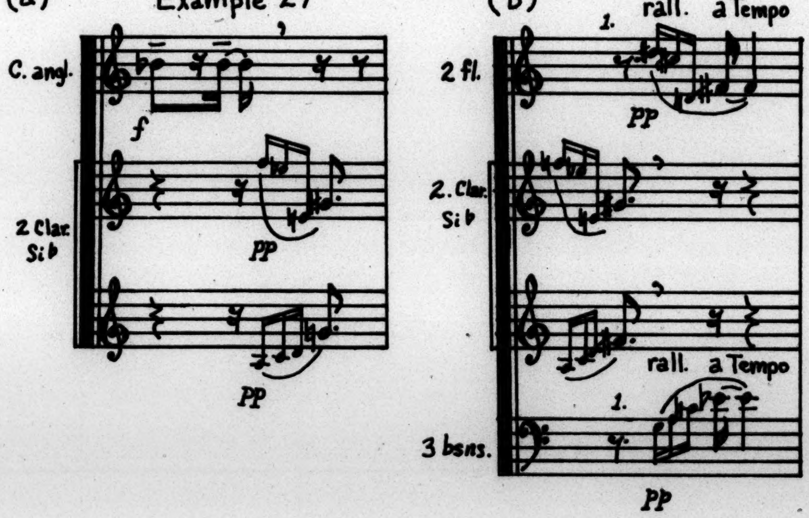
Example 27


Trom. 1.,2.
fff
fff
Trom. 3.
fff
fff
Tuba
fff
fff
Trb. 1.,2.
Trb. 3
Tuba

Example 28


R.H.
L.H.
f
sf
R.H.
L.H.
f
sf
sf
sf
sf
sf
8va più basso

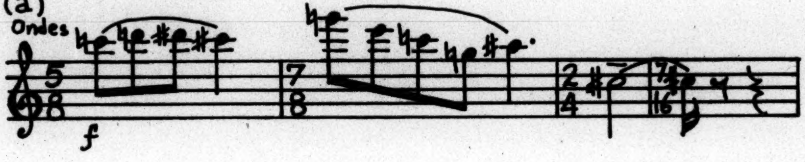
Example 29


(a)

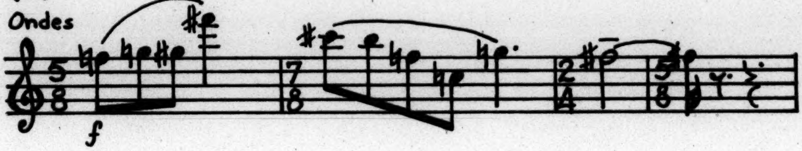
(b)
C. angl.
f
2 Clar. Si♭
PP
PP
1.
rall.
a Tempo
2 fl.
PP
2. Clar. Si♭
rall.
a Tempo
1.
3 bsns.
PP

Example 30

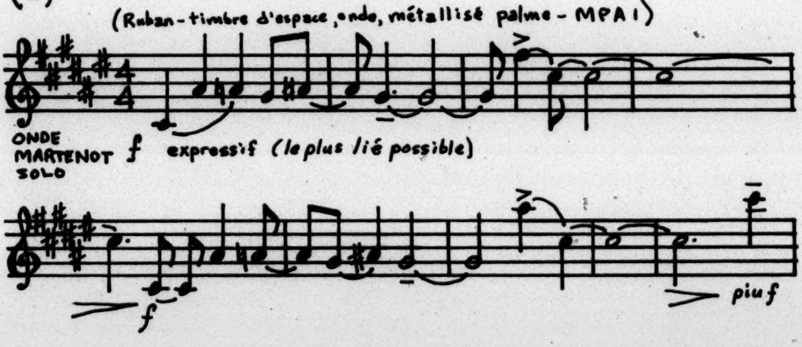
(a)



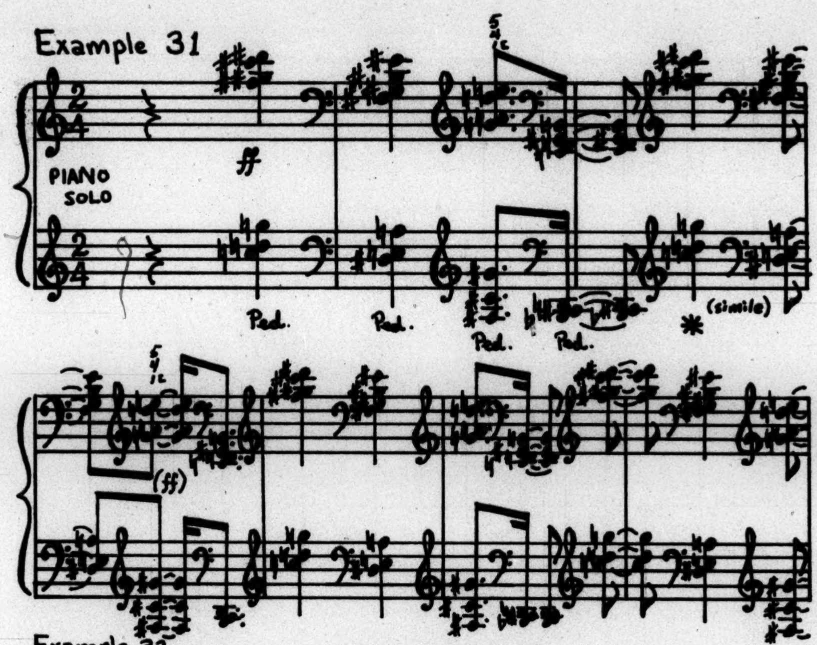
(b)



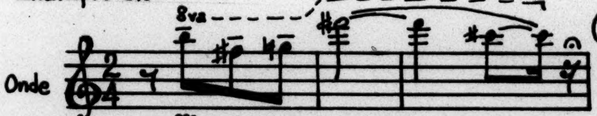
(c)


(Ruban-timbre d'espace, onde, métallisé palme - MPA 1)
ONDE MARTENOT SOLO
f
expressif (le plus lié possible)
f
piu f

Example 31

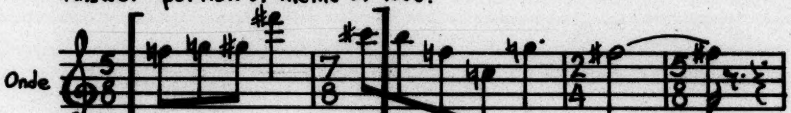

PIANO SOLO
ff
Ped.
Ped.
Ped.
Ped.
(simile)
(ff)

Example 32

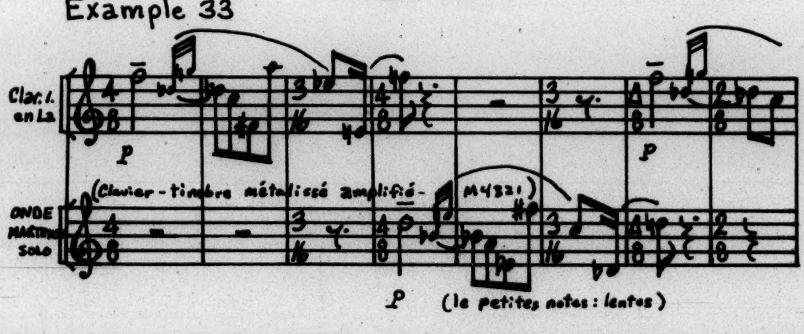

Onde
8va
fff

(Closing portion of Ondes Martenot theme.)

"Answer" portion of theme of love:



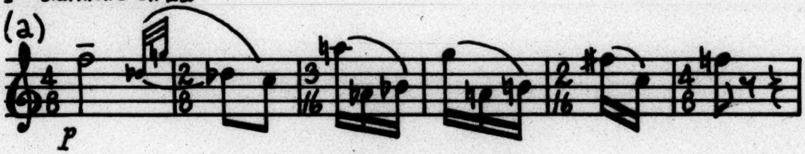
Example 33


Clar. I. en La
p
p
(Clavier-timbre métallissé amplifié - M4331)
ONDE MARTENOT SOLO
p
(le petites notes: lentes)

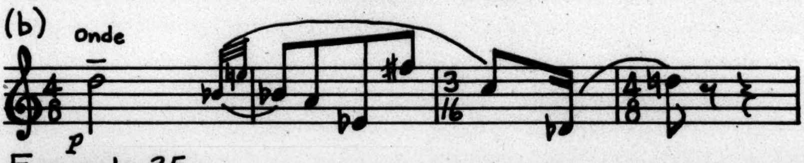
Example 34

1res Clarinette en La

(a)

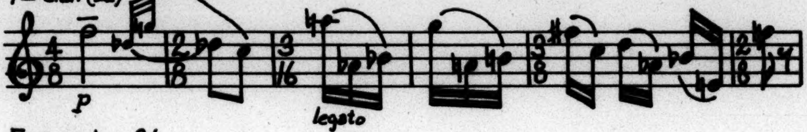


(b)



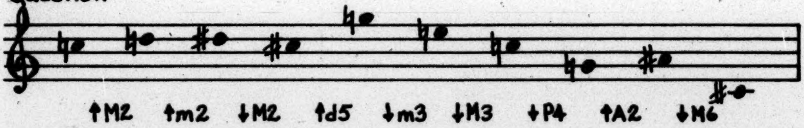
Example 35

1res Clar. (La)

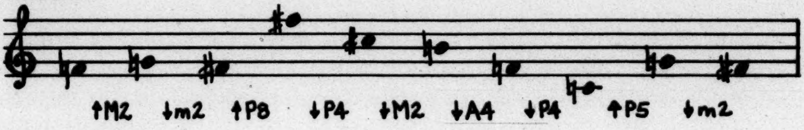


Example 36

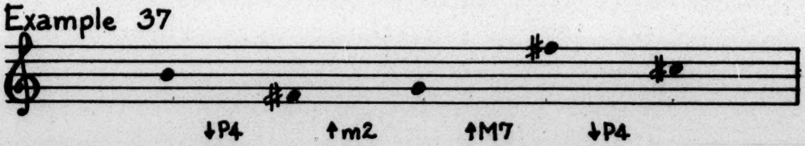
Question


↑M2
↑m2
↓M2
↑d5
↓m3
↓M3
↓P4
↑A2
↓M6

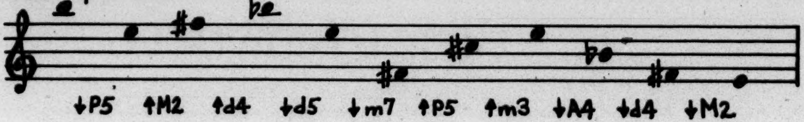
Answer


↑M2
↓m2
↑P8
↓P4
↑M2
↓A4
↓P4
↑P5
↓m2

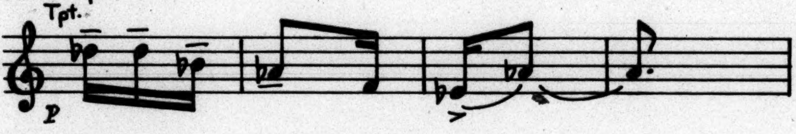
Example 37



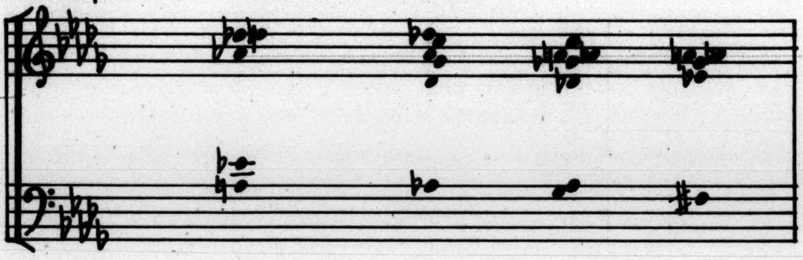
Example 38


↓P5
↑M2
↑d4
↓d5
↓m7
↑P5
↑m3
↓A4
↓d4
↓M2

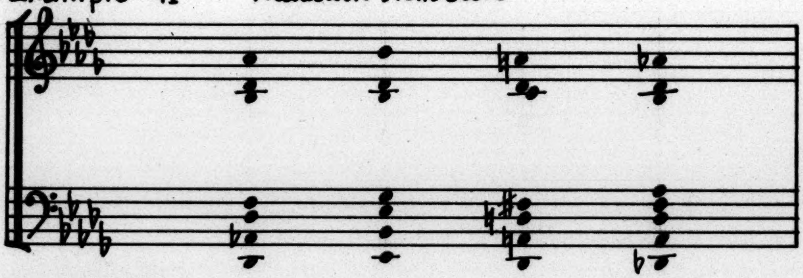
Example 39



Example 40 *Reduction from score*

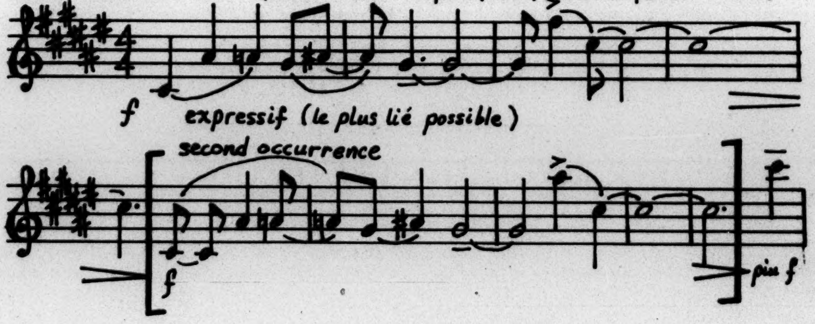


Example 41 *Reduction from score*

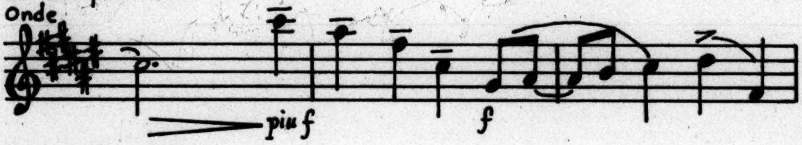


Example 42

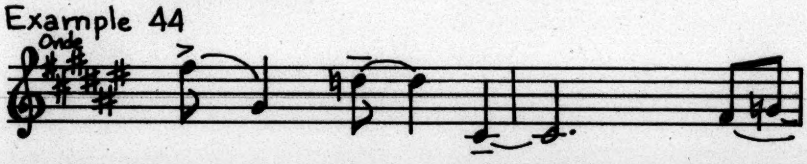
ONDE MARTENOT SOLO (Ruban-timbre d'espace, onde, métallisé palme - MPA1)


f
expressif (le plus lié possible)
second occurrence
f
piu f

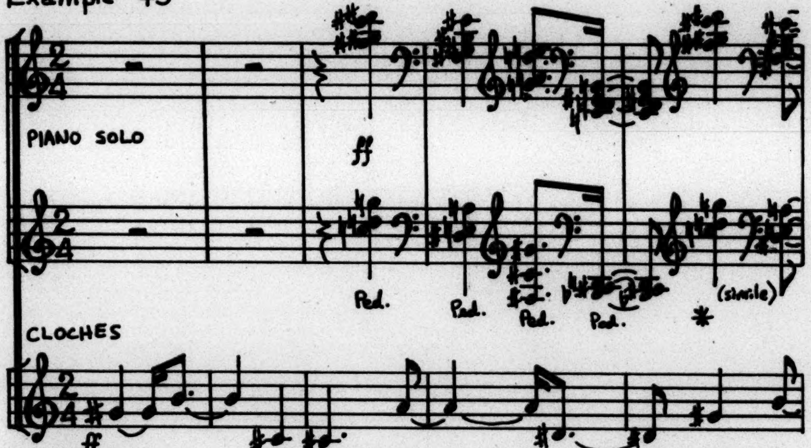
Example 43



Example 44

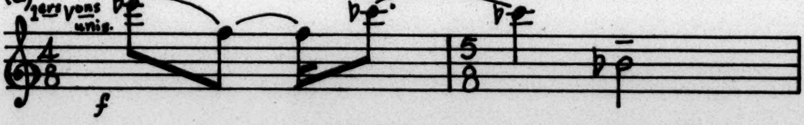


Example 45

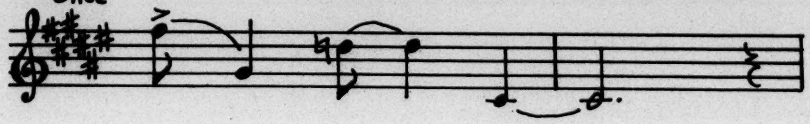

PIANO SOLO
ff
Ped.
Ped.
Ped.
Ped.
(simile)
*
CLOCHES
ff

Example 46 Theme of love, eighth movement

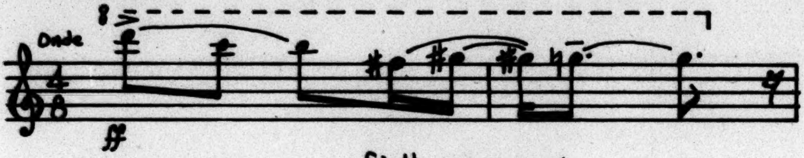
(a)


1ers Vons unis.
f

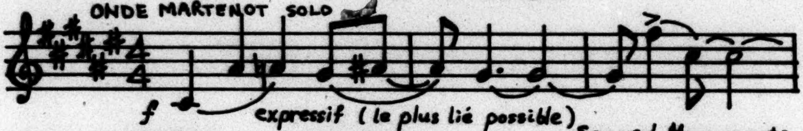
(b) Theme of love, sixth movement



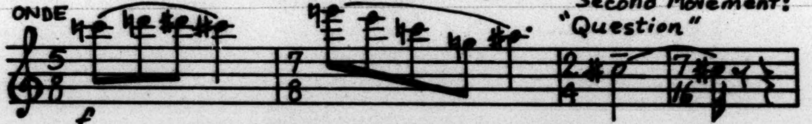
Example 47 Theme of love, eighth movement



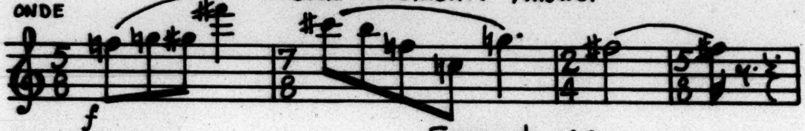
Sixth movement


ONDE MARTENOT SOLO
f
expressif (le plus lié possible)

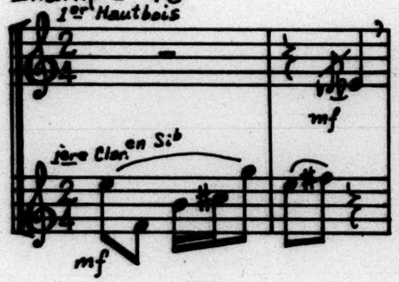
Second Movement: "Question"



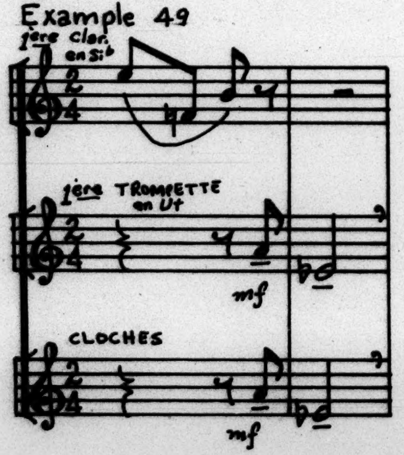
Second Movement: "Answer"



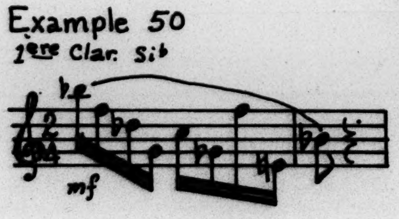
Example 48


1er Hautbois
mf
1ère Clar. en Sib
mf

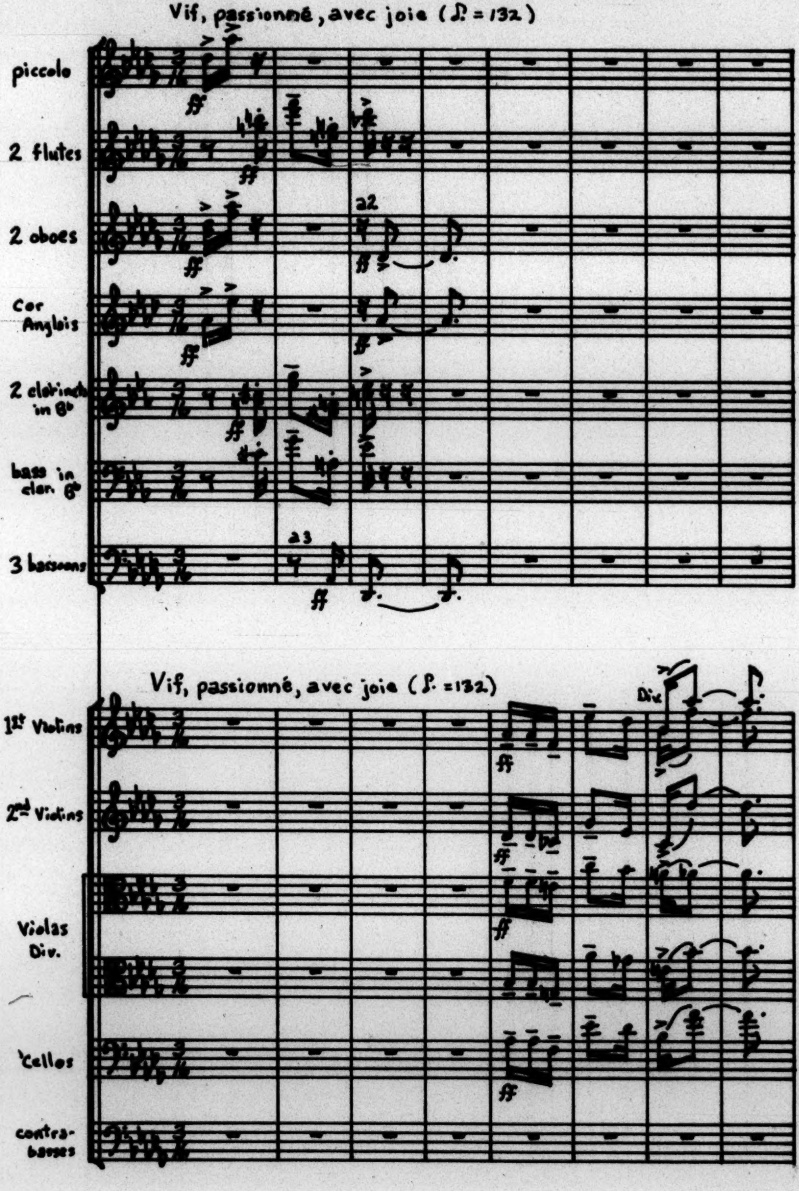
Example 49


1ère Clar. en Sib
1ère TROMPETTE en Ut
mf
CLOCHES
mf

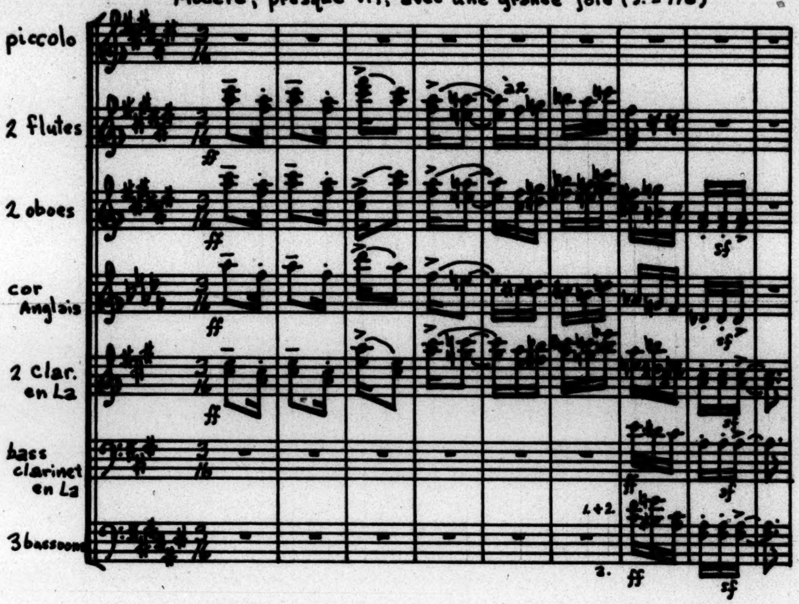
Example 50


1ère Clar. Sib
mf

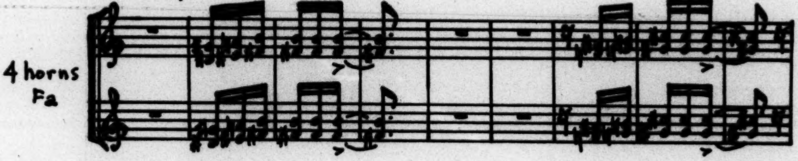
Example 51 JOIE DU SANG DES ÉTOILES


Vif, passionné, avec joie (♪. = 132)
piccolo
2 flutes
2 oboes
Cor Anglais
2 clarinets in B♭
bass clar. in B♭
3 bassoons
a2
a3
ff
Vif, passionné, avec joie (♪. = 132)
1st Violins
2nd Violins
Violas Div.
'Cellos
contra-basses
Div.

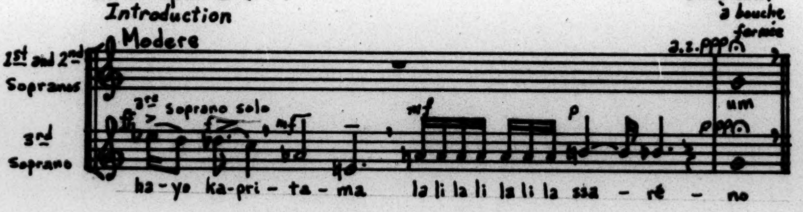
Example 52 FINAL


Modéré, presque vif, avec une grande joie (♪ = 116)
piccolo
2 flutes
2 oboes
cor Anglais
2 clar. en La
bass clarinet en La
3 bassoons
ff
sf
à 2
1+2
2.

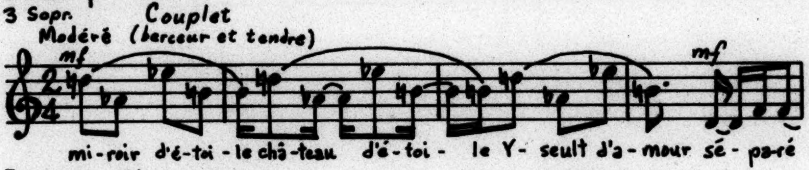
Example 53



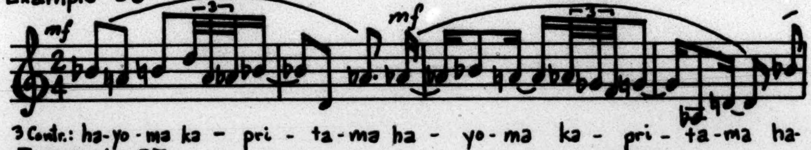
Example 54


Introduction
Modere
(lointain)
à bouche fermée
1st and 2nd Sopranos
3rd Soprano
3rd Soprano solo
mf
p
ppp
um
ha-yo ka-pri-ta-ma la li la li la li la ssa-ré-no

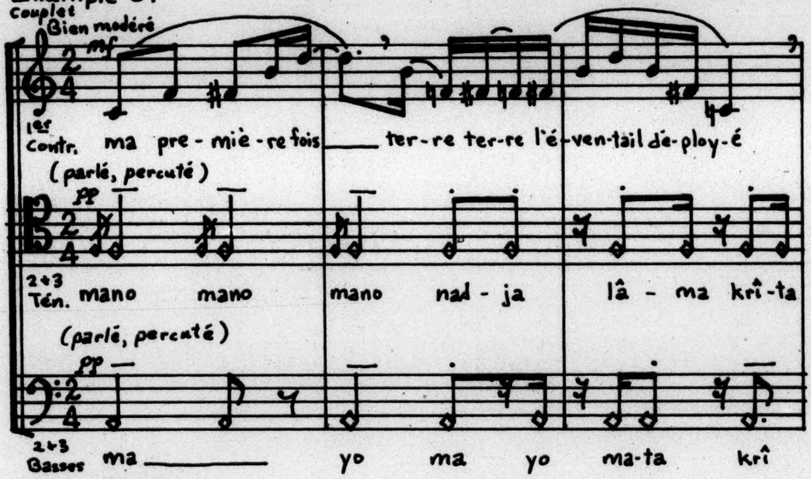
Example 55


3 Sopr.
Couplet
Modéré (berceur et tendre)
mf
mf
mi-roir d'é-toi-le châ-teau d'é-toi- le Y-seult d'a-mour sé-pa-ré

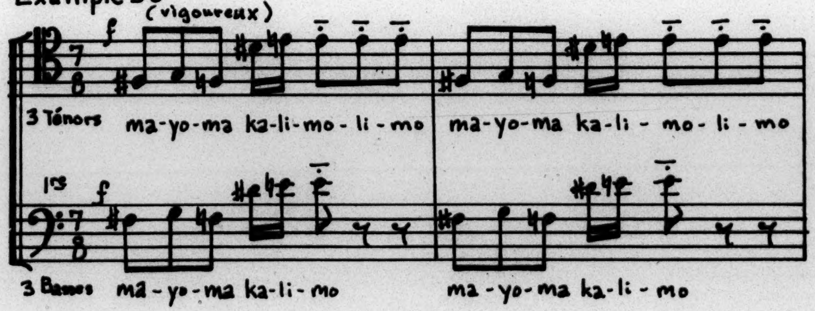
Example 56


mf
mf
3
3
3 Contr.: ha-yo-ma ka - pri - ta-ma ha - yo-ma ka - pri - ta-ma ha-

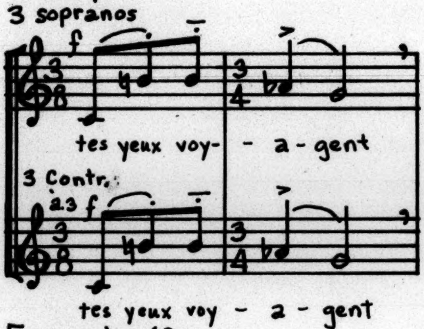
Example 57


Couplet
Bien modéré
mf
1er Contr. ma pre-miè-re fois ___ ter-re ter-re l'é-ven-tail dé-ploy-é
(parlé, percuté)
pp
2+3 Tén. mano mano mano nad - ja lâ - ma krî-ta
(parlé, percuté)
pp
2+3 Basses ma ______ yo ma yo ma-ta krî

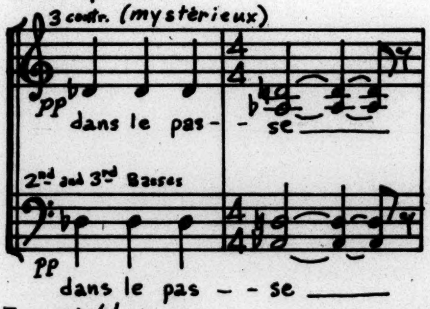
Example 58


(vigoureux)
f
3 Ténors ma-yo-ma ka-li-mo-li-mo ma-yo-ma ka-li-mo-li-mo
1rs
f
3 Basses ma-yo-ma ka-li-mo ma-yo-ma ka-li-mo

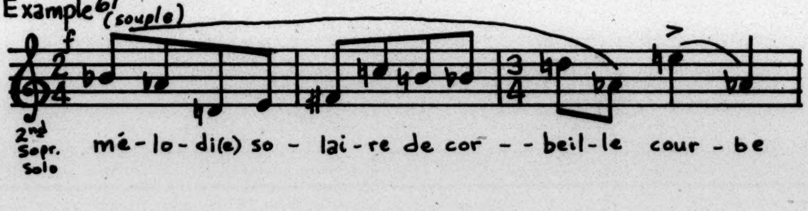
Example 59


3 sopranos
f
tes yeux voy- - a - gent
3 Contr.
à 3 f
tes yeux voy - a - gent

Example 60


3 contr. (mystérieux)
pp
dans le pas- - se
2nd and 3rd Basses
pp
dans le pas - - se

Example 61


(souple)
f
2nd Sopr. Solo
mé - lo - di(e) so - lai - re de cor - - beil - le cour - be

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__________. *Vingt Regards sur l'enfant Jésus*. John Ogdon, pianist. Argo ZRG 650-1.

AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL STATEMENT

NAME: Audrey Jean Ekdahl Davidson

BORN: August 7, 1930, in Willmar, Minnesota; daughter of Harry and Lydia Ekdahl.

MARRIED: July 1954, to Clifford Davidson.

EDUCATION: Willmar High School, graduated 1948; Bethel College, St. Paul, Minnesota, 1949-50; St. Cloud State College, 1950-54; University of Minnesota, 1956; Wayne State University, 1959-65 (B.A., 1961; M.A., 1964); Oakland University, 1966 (Early Music Institute with New York Pro Musica); University of Minnesota, 1969-75. Private Study (Voice): Robert Holliday, St. Paul, Minnesota, 1954-56; William Heyne, St. Louis, Missouri, 1957; Avery Crew, Detroit, Michigan, 1959-65. Major area: Music. Minor area: English. Master's thesis: "Henry Lawes and His Songs."

POSITIONS HELD: Research Assistant, Mt. Olivet Lutheran Church, Minneapolis, 1953-54; Instructional Assistant, English Department, Wayne State University, 1960-64; Soloist, Grosse Pointe Memorial Church, 1960-65; Graduate Assistant, English Department, Wayne State University, 1964-65; Part-Time Instructor, Western Michigan University, 1965-67; Adjunct Assistant Professor, Western Michigan University, 1967-74; Assistant Professor, Western Michigan University, 1974- ; Musical Director, Society for Old Music, 1966- .

CONCERTS: Solo recitals in Detroit and Kalamazoo; soloist with Wayne State University Choral Union and Symphony, 1963 and 1965; soloist with Kalamazoo Symphony, 1966; soloist with Ives Festival, Minneapolis, 1970; member of Kenneth Jewell Chorale, spring 1964; musical director of Society for Old Music, performances of medieval and renaissance music at conferences sponsored by the Medieval Institute, 1966, 1968, 1970, 1971, 1972, 1973, 1974, and frequent presentations for the community.

PUBLICATIONS: *I Will Sing Unto the Lord a New Song: The* Works of Heinz Werner Zimmermann (Wittenberg, Ohio, 1969); "Milton on the Music of Henry Lawes," *Milton Newsletter*, 1968; "Transcendental Unity in the Works of Charles Ives," *American Quarterly*, 1970; "The Games John Cage Plays," *Michigan Academician*, 1972; "Eliade and Church Renewal," *Student Musicologists at Minnesota*, 1970-71; "The Little Clergeon's Song: *Alma Redemptoris Mater*," *Studies in Medieval Culture*, 1974; "Stereo Troubadours," *Ralph*, 1974.